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A SERMON,

Preached Feb. 3, 1793, at the Scots Church, London Wall,

ON OCCASION OF THE

TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, AND EXECUTION

OF

LOUIS XVI. LATE KING OF FRANCE.

WITH SOME ADDITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By HENRY HUNTER, D. D.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED,

AT THE EARNEST REQUEST OF MANY RESPECTED FRIENDS,

A REPUBLICATION OF

A DISCOURSE

ON THE

RISE AND FALL OF THE PAPACY;

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE
PRESENT CENTURY,

By ROBERT FLEMING, V. D. M.

THEN MINISTER OF THE SCOTS CHURCH IN LONDON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR AND EDITOR,

SOLD BY JOHN MURRAY, NO. 32, FLEET-STREET.

1793.

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A SERMON

Preached Feb. 3, 1793, at the New Church, London W. 4.

OF THE

TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, AND EXECUTION

OF THE SIN OF ENVY

WITH AN ADDRESS TO THE ASSOCIATION

BY HENRY WATSON, D.D.



TO
THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

WHICH ASSEMBLES FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

AT

THE SCOTS CHURCH, LONDON WALL.

MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS,

PERMIT me to embrace the opportunity which the present publication affords, of thus expressing the affection and gratitude with which my heart overflows toward you. Let this short address remain as a monument of the sacred union which has subsisted between us these twenty-two years past, after I am mingled with the dust of my predecessors, and let it admonish us to aim constantly at an union *eternal in the heavens*.

It gives me pleasure to draw from obscurity and to rescue from oblivion a valuable and interesting tract, by one who, a century ago, occupied the honourable station which I now so unworthily fill. The Scots Church was then a numerous and respectable society; it has all along maintained respectability and reputation; and my highest earthly ambition is to transmit my Charge as I found it, united, improving, and prosperous, to my successor. Deeply sensible that the only means of securing this is the joint cultivation of a spirit of concord, and persevering efforts to keep alive and promote the interests of *pure and undefiled religion*, I call upon you to *keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*; to *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*; to *live by the faith of the Son of God*: and I earnestly pray to God to *send the Spirit*.

(vii)

*Spirit of his Son into your hearts, that this
mind may be in you, which was also in Christ
Jesus.*

I remain,

With unfeigned and increasing affection,

Your much indebted,

And grateful Friend and Pastor,

Bethnal-Green Road,
21st Feb. 1793.

HEN. HUNTER.

(44)

Spent of his time and money, that the
land may be in use, which was also in the

I remain,

With great respect and increasing affection,

Your obedient servant,

And greatest friend and Father,

HEN. HUNTER.

Richard Green Road,

P R E F A C E.

THE sentiments which I have ventured to express in the following Discourse, first from the pulpit, and now from the press, are, I have reason to believe, those of the whole British nation. Whatever difference of opinion may have prevailed respecting the necessity, nature, and progress of the French Revolution, there seems to be but one opinion respecting the horrid scene acted at Paris on the twenty-first of January, last—the public decapitation of Louis XVI. namely, that it was an act of complicated inhumanity and injustice.

But what has the pulpit to do with politics? It has to do with every thing that relates to the moral government of the great Supreme. Its very province is to point out and to impress remarkable dispensations of Providence; to compare events as they arise
5 into

into light, with what is written in the word of God; to direct men's eyes through the revolutions which are continually affecting the state of this world, to the perpetual progress and everlasting establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom. The effort made to this purpose was not unacceptable to the people of my own charge, for they have solicited its publication; and to gratify them, more than to please myself, I have complied.

But, on the present occasion, I feel myself bound to acknowledge, that I wish the character of Author to be lost in that of Editor. It will be sufficient honour to this trifle of my own, to announce the re-appearance of my respectable Predecessor: and to prepare the way for his learned, ingenious, and instructive discourse on the *Rise and Fall of the Papacy*. The importance of the subject, the ability displayed in Mr. Fleming's mode of treating it, the justification of several of his conjectures by recent events and present appearances, the scarcity of the tract likewise exciting public curiosity, determined me to undertake this re-publication. I was farther
impelled

impelled from the consideration of the relation in which I stand to the Author, as lineally his Successor in the pastoral care of the Scots Church, then at Founders' Hall, Lothbury, now London Wall. It was at first my intention to have reprinted only those remarkable and striking passages which refer to the times in which we live. But on maturer reflection, and by the advice of friends whose judgment I highly respect, I have been induced to present the entire discourse, with the dedication and prefatory address, in its original form: and this I do the more readily, that, whatever solidity and truth may be in Mr. Fleming's *Apocalyptical Conjectures* (for his modesty permits him not to use a stronger expression), his *practical* observations must always and universally be seasonable and useful.

If the view here given of ancient prophecy, and the confirmation of the truth of God by history, experience, and the whole tide of events, shall be an inducement to any to *search*, to ponder, to compare, and to delight in *the Scriptures*; and serve to awaken
attention

attention to the ways of God's holy Providence, an important point will be gained, and a great public benefit conferred. May the blessing of Heaven crown every attempt which has such an object in view.

A SERMON.

A S E R M O N.

DAN. ii. 19—23.

Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.

Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever : for wisdom and might are his : And he changeth the times and the seasons : he removeth kings, and setteth up kings : he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding : He revealeth the deep and secret things : he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee.

THOUGH the Supreme Ruler of the Universe conducts and controls all his creatures, and all their actions, yet in ordinary events his agency is less observed, and therefore less acknowledged. A careless, slumbering world is therefore, from time to time, roused to attention, by dispensations of Providence which are out of the usual course of things ; and violent stimulants are called in to disturb the lethargy of inconsideration and worldly-mindedness. If ever there was a period in the history of mankind when the hand of Heaven

B

was

was rendered visible, in the production of extraordinary events, and these apparently pregnant with others still more interesting and important, it is the present. What “ wars
 “ and rumours of wars !” What ferment in the nations ! What mortality of the potentates of the earth ! What dissolution of the bands which unite man to man, and country to country ! Comets glaring in the sky !
 “ and upon the earth distress of nations,
 “ with perplexity; the sea and the waves
 “ roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear,
 “ and for looking after those things which
 “ are coming on the earth.” The signs of the times are so striking, that they seem to call on the ministers of religion carefully to observe them, and earnestly to impress on the minds of those to whom they minister, serious attention to the ways of Providence, and a wise improvement of them, as Men, Britons, and Christians.

In this view, I deviate, on the present occasion, from the regular course of religious instruction pursued in this place ; if it can be deemed a deviation, to call on the people of my charge, to behold “ the arm of the Lord
 “ revealed;” to pray, and to prepare, for the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom;
 to

to purify their hearts, and to reform their lives; that seeing the " judgments " of God " are " in the earth, the inhabitants of the world " may learn righteousness."

The words which I have read refer to a noted passage of ancient sacred history. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had just carried into captivity the wretched remains of the Israelitish nation, once the wonder and glory of the whole earth. Among other captives of note was this Daniel, and his three illustrious companions; destined of High Heaven to carry with them, into a land of ignorance and idolatry, the gift of prophecy, and the knowledge of the living and true God. Providence speedily furnishes an opportunity to the young prophet of displaying to advantage those rare endowments with which the divine Spirit had enriched him. The royal couch is visited with the visions of the Almighty. A regular series of distinct and impressive images is made to pass through the king's mind in sleep, by the power of Him, in whose hand are the hearts of princes. In the morning the impression remains, but the images are entirely effaced; and no effort of waking memory can recall them. The wise and learned are in vain consulted, in order to remove the

load which oppressed a troubled monarch's breast; for what human skill extends to a case like this? Exasperated because magicians could not operate an impossibility, Nebuchadnezzar dooms all the wise men of Babylon, and Daniel among the rest, to instant death. A delay of execution is intreated on the part of Daniel and his fellows, and is obtained. Recourse is had to prayer, and an answer of peace is given. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision;" and not only so, but the power of recollecting it is at the same time conferred, together with the still greater gift, of unfolding the historical events which were mysteriously wrapped up in the vision. This instance of the divine power and condescension overwhelms the prophet with wonder, joy, and gratitude, and suggests the rapturous expressions in the text: "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to, them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth
 " with

“ with him. I thank thee, and praise thee,
 “ O thou God of my fathers, who hast given
 “ me wisdom and might, and hast made
 “ known unto me now what we desired of
 “ thee.” A few of the important, im-
 mutable truths, contained in these words, are
 now to be submitted to your serious con-
 sideration, and illustrated by history and ex-
 perience.

Observe I. How every “ creature is made
 “ subject to vanity.” “ The times and the
 “ seasons are perpetually changing,” and,
 with them, all the counsels, and all the af-
 fairs of men. The revolutions of day and
 night are not more steady and certain than
 those which affect the state of the moral and
 political world. Alas, these last have all the
 certainty of change to which the former are
 subjected, but without their steadiness and
 uniformity. An unvarying law of Nature
 directs the one; human passions, more va-
 riable than the wind, mingle with the other,
 and perplex, confound, subvert all things.
 On tracing up mighty revolutions to their
 source, it was a little spring which a man
 might have stopped with the sole of his
 foot; but which, permitted to flow on,
 gradually strengthens itself with auxiliary

streams, till it becomes a mighty torrent, defying all resistance and opposition; and like the river of Egypt, having deluged an empire for a season, retreats again as fast, and silently steals away in various thirsty channels into the ocean. To no purpose have attempts been made to attach permanency to human things. All have failed, and fail they ever must. The foundation is insecure; the builders ignorant, feeble, and unskilful; and the materials perishable. Imperial and pontifical Rome presents one among “a cloud of witnesses,” to attest the truth of this. And let not the Nations be alarmed at the efforts of an upstart modern Republic, that wondrous phoenix springing up out of the ashes of expiring royalty, to acquire universal dominion, under the insolent pretence of extending liberty. A cause which affects to despise principles hitherto respected among men, which tramples under foot the sacred institutions of religion, which turns a deaf ear to the voice of misery, which has polluted itself with innocent blood, is not honourable, and cannot prosper. In such a state of things, “the change of times and seasons” is “a consummation devoutly to be wished;” and it is a consolation to reflect, that “verily there is a God
 “who

“ who judgeth in the earth.” But what calamities may be endured, what rivers of innocent blood flow, in settling the dire contention ! My heart bleeds to think of my brave, generous countrymen, exposed to the dagger of the assassin, or to combat in the field, or on the flood, with the executioners of demons in human form, men whose “ tender mercies are cruelty.” I flee for relief to a

II. Important truth conveyed by the prophet, namely, That the counsels of Heaven blending with the purposes of men, give them a consistency, a solidity, a direction, an importance not their own. “ Wisdom and “ might are his ; and He changeth the times “ and the seasons :” as it is written by another Prophet, and transcribed from him by the Apostle of the gentiles, “ I will destroy “ the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to “ nought the understanding of the prudent.”

One of the severest threatenings contained in the word of God, and, where it has been executed, the severest of punishments, is to leave men to themselves ; “ My people,” says an offended God, “ would not hearken unto “ my voice ; and Israel would none of me. “ So I gave them up unto their own hearts “ lust ; and they walked in their own coun-

"fals:" and in another place, "Ephraim is
 "joined to idols, let him alone." But even
 in permitting men, whether nationally or in-
 dividually, to entangle themselves in their
 own devices, an over-ruling Providence is car-
 rying on plans of wisdom and mercy unto per-
 fection; and "the wrath of man" is made
 to "praise God," and to work out his righ-
 teousness. All history confirms this. The
 particular event which I shall produce in
 proof, is the most interesting and illustrious
 that ever visited the world. I give it, with-
 out a commentary, in the words of an in-
 spired apostle. Having quoted this notable
 prediction from the Psalms concerning the
 Messiah, "Why did the heathen rage, and
 "the people imagine vain things? The kings
 "of the earth stood up, and the rulers were
 "gathered together against the Lord, and
 "against his Christ;" Peter thus proceeds to
 make the application: "For, of a truth,
 "against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou
 "hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pi-
 "late, with the gentiles, and the people of
 "Israel, were gathered together, for to do
 "whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel de-
 "termined before to be done." From igno-
 rant, erring, corrupted man, what is to be
 expected

expected but confusion, inconsistency, violence, every evil work? but under the subduing hand of Omnipotence all is order, harmony and peace. Europe, at this moment, presents a scene of dreadful agitation; and when, and by what means, the storm is to subside into a calm, is a secret which "the Father hath kept in his own power;" and which "the day shall declare;" but surely it is not presumption to express a belief, that the final issue will undoubtedly be favourable to the great interests of truth, virtue, and religion. France is apparently severed, and for ever, from the See of Rome, and thereby a considerable diminution of popish usurpation is effected. A separation not to be ascribed, indeed, to religious illumination, to free enquiry producing conviction; but to impatience of all restraint, but to the frenzy of the day, but to a prevailing character of irreligion. Nevertheless, when the storm *shall have* spent itself, and calamity shall have subdued that aspiring people to serious reflection; when reason shall have resumed its empire, and conscience returned to the exercise of its sacred rights, is it not to be hoped, that this eldest son, this chief support of the Roman Catholic Church, may be disposed of Heaven to tender to Great Britain

Britain a fraternity which she can with safety, with wisdom, and with honour, accept—a fraternity in cultivating universal peace, and in promoting “ pure and undefiled religion ?”

“ The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice :
 “ let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.”

III. The elevation and depression of princes is peculiarly the work of Providence. “ He
 “ removeth kings, and setteth up kings.” This is no place for discussing the nature, forms, and principles of government. It is sufficient for my present purpose to say, that royalty, variously modified, has been, and is, in almost every age and nation of the earth, the mode of governing mankind ; and may therefore be justly considered as “ the ordinance of God :” and every ordinance of God is respectable. In the rise and fall of sovereigns, the interests, and the fate of millions are involved : and this it is that stamps them with importance in the eye of sound reason, as of eternal Providence. God is accordingly represented in Scripture as both giving and taking away kings in his anger. The prolongation or abridgment of their life and sovereignty is, according to circumstances, a blessing or a curse to the world : and both are the operation of Him who “ doth accord-
 “ ing

“ ing to his will in the army of heaven, and
 “ among the inhabitants of the earth.” But
 the elevation and downfall even of princes, in
 the ordinary course of events, make but a
 slight and transitory impression. “ His breath”
 too “ goeth forth ; and he returneth to his
 “ earth,” like other men. “ One goeth
 “ and another cometh ;” the wonder is soon
 over, and the change is hardly felt—sad hu-
 miliation to the pride of man ! But when
 God is pleased to create an unusual, or a new
 thing in the earth ; when the exaltation or
 removal is effected by the instrumentality of
 men, with an accumulation of singular cir-
 cumstances, we are constrained to attend to
 the human agency which interposed, and to
 the spirit which directed it. Of this nature
 is the dreadful tragedy so lately acted in a
 neighbouring country, and which has issued
 in the barbarous and bloody execution of one
 of the most humane of men, and most gentle
 and beneficent of princes : an act so atrocious
 in itself, and accompanied with aggravations
 so horrid, that every one, not lost to huma-
 nity, must wonder who could perpetrate it.
 Considered as the work of man, this event
 inspires horror or kindles indignation. The
 reasons assigned for dooming the devoted vic-
 tim

tim to death are, many of them, an insult to human understanding, and a barefaced mockery of justice. The unnecessary and wanton triumph expressed over fallen royalty, argue the lowest and most brutal insensibility. The indecent haste employed in executing the dreadful sentence, exhibits a determination hostile to all the finer feelings of the heart, and all the more solemn suggestions of conscience. The treatment of the bleeding corpse discovers a spirit of vengeance worthy of him who is a murderer from the beginning. "Curfed be their anger, for it was fierce, and
 "their wrath, for it was cruel! O my soul,
 "come not thou into their secret, unto their
 "assembly mine honour be not thou united,
 "for in their anger they slew a man," a king.—But, as the operation of the great Supreme, every thing assumes a different aspect. The tide of human wrath subsides; a Convention shrinks into an hillock of ants; the words *Monarchy* and *Republic* become equally a term of pity or of derision, and the bullying of a Despot, or of a Demagogue, sinks into equal contempt. In the instance before us, whatever may have been the motives and the views of the actors in this awful scene,

Providence

Providence clearly seems to have been consulting both the reputation and the everlasting happiness of the Sufferer himself. Had his career of sovereignty rolled quietly along to the end, it might have terminated, like that of his ancestors, many days hence, inglorious, unregretted. Absorbed in the dissipation of an ostentatious, luxurious court, his mind might have remained a stranger to the dictates and the consolations of religion. Adversity has brought to light intellectual powers which the world ascribed not to him before, and experience of the absolute nothingness of all earthly grandeur raised his soul to the contemplation, the pursuit, and, I trust, the attainment of immortal felicity. The sentiments expressed in the paper which he composed immediately previous to his death, now in every one's hands, are worthy of a man, of a king, of a Christian. What fortitude in the prospect of approaching dissolution, arrayed in all its terror ! What humility in acknowledging the frail, the fallible, the guilty creature ! What magnanimity in stifling every emotion of resentment against his enemies ! What paternal love of, and tenderness to his country ! What

an affecting display of the social and domestic virtues ! All excites admiration and commands respect ; fills the heart with alternate regret and indignation ; regret in contemplating the hard fate of such a victim, indignation at the barbarians who remorselessly embrued their hands in his blood. The event has furnished an occasion of displaying, in a very striking light, the different characters of the two rival nations, much to the advantage of our own. Britain mourns, sincerely mourns, the premature fall of a foreign prince against whom she had no small ground of offence. She has forgotten that it was Louis who severed America from her, and thereby meant to enfeeble and humble her. She sees with concern the unkind, the ungenerous counsels of that day, recoiling on his own devoted head ; and loses all thought of the enemy and the king, in respect for the virtues, and sympathy in the sufferings, of the man. France, on the contrary, revels in the blood of her native prince, once the pride and the delight of every eye, and the theme of every tongue ; exults in the miseries of him who, under Providence, conferred upon her that very liberty which she understands

understands so ill, and is abusing so shamefully. Let these considerations be, by the blessing of God, improved by us

As a ground of national gratitude and joy for the innumerable and unspeakable blessings which as a nation and a people we possess. They are all the gift of a kind Providence, and for them we are deeply responsible. They are real blessings only in so far as they are accompanied by the spirit of true religion; for unless it sanctifies and supports all the rest, possession is both insecure and unsatisfactory. The best way in which a man can serve his country, is to be unfeignedly good. He does most toward a reformation of the state, who is at pains to amend his own life, and he is the most loyal of subjects who fears God. We have in the present state of our neighbours a loud warning not to listen to men who are given to change, to know when we are well, and to be thankful for it. It is easy to undermine and to demolish, but to build up requires time, and cost, and labour. In the rage of innovation men do not always stop where they intended, nor even where they wished. Who could have thought, three years ago, of the event which we this day deplore?

deplore? Many things at home, no doubt, call for reformation, and the voice of that call will, I trust, be heard and complied with. But truth is never loud, rash, and violent. Many reforms of our excellent constitution have been made, and many defects supplied, since its first establishment. Time and experience will, probably, discover still farther defects, and point out the propriety and necessity, as well as the nature of the remedy. As wise men and good subjects, let us meanwhile prize and improve what we already enjoy, and not increase the evil by restlessness and discontent. Domestic union will most successfully encounter, and most speedily terminate foreign discord.

Could my feeble voice, at the same time, reach the ears of our rulers, I would obtest them under every tender, every sacred adjuration, to meet the known and reasonable wishes of the people, and interpose the power committed to them, toward the removal, or at least the alleviation of real distress. The industrious poor labour under many hardships which admit of a remedy. The oppression of the poor's rate is in innumerable instances intolerable, and loudly calls for immediate, vigilant,

gilant, and persevering inspection. The price of every necessary of life is, beyond all example, exorbitant; an unfeeling, systematic scarcity and supply is tolerated, connived at, encouraged. Oppression has driven our neighbours into madness. May our governors, inspired with the wisdom which is from above, foresee and prevent the contagion at home; and fix their empire in the hearts of a loyal, an affectionate, and a grateful nation!

But all this refers only to temporal and transitory interests. As Christians we have infinitely higher and more important concerns at stake. Change, decay, mortality, are necessarily attached to ours, as to the other empires of this world. "See then that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven:" whose voice is now dreadfully shaking the earth, and who "hath promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, "but also heaven. And this word, *Yet once more* signifieth the removing of those things "that are shaken, as of things that are made, "that those things which cannot be shaken "may remain. Wherefore we receiving a "kingdom which cannot be moved, let us "have grace, whereby we may serve God
C "acceptably

“ acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”
 —Seeing “ that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye
 “ to be in all holy conversation and godliness,
 “ looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God?” Let the inferior character of Briton be ever under the animation and control of the higher character of Christian, and the duties of the man and the citizen be directed by the love of the Redeemer of mankind. Let every one feel the obligation of assisting the counsels, and the arms, of his country, by his fervent prayers to the great Disposer of all events, who is evidently furthering his wise and gracious purposes, through the midst of all this bustle and confusion, and, without the knowledge or concurrence of senators and cabinets, is maturing the affairs of the world for their grand consummation. And when the second glorious Creation shall be finished, it shall be celebrated like the first, “ When the morning
 “ stars sang together, and all the sons of God
 “ shouted for joy :” and God himself, having surveyed the extended plan of his Providence, from first to last, shall pronounce
 “ all” to be “ very good.”

ADDITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

WHAT Mortality of the Potentates of the earth! Page 2. l. 10.—Leopold II. Emperor of Germany, was suddenly carried off, as is suspected, by poison, March 1, 1792. Gustavus III. King of Sweden, was mortally wounded by an assassin, in the height of a public festivity, on the 16th of the same month; and Louis XVI. of France, fell by the hand of the executioner, Jan. 21, 1793. All within the compass of a few months. An awful lesson to princes!

A cause which affects to despise principles hitherto respected among men, &c. Page 6. l. 14.—A declaration of *atheism* was lately made in the National Convention of France, by one of its members, and received with loud applause. The observance of the Christian Sabbath has long been neglected and derided in that country, and the sittings of their Assemblies and Convention pay no regard to the “the day of sacred rest.” This accounts, in part, for many of their enormities in conduct.

duct. Men who have cast off all "fear" of "God" will be little disposed to "honour the king:" and of those who dare to "blaspheme the God of heaven," there is little hope that they will "repent of their deeds."

The reasons assigned for dooming the devoted victim to death, &c. Page 11. l. 26.—I take the liberty of transcribing some of them, as an admonition to my countrymen to be grateful, and to rejoice that their lives and property are maintained and secured on far better principles, and at the disposal of more equitable judges.

Louvet. "Representatives, the safety of the Republic is in your hands. Pay homage to the national sovereignty. Should you fall by the daggers of tyrants, you will enjoy the enviable consolation of having done your duty. My opinion is unchangeable, *death*, according to the constitution."

Leonard Bourdon. "Death, for two reasons: general safety, and the crime; and, from humanity, let the execution be within twenty-four hours."

Jean Bon St. André. "This is a combat of liberty against tyranny, and this com-

" bat is *death*. The punishment is indeed
 " terrible, but in this case it becomes a duty.
 " To give an example to all nations who
 " wish to be free, to annihilate tyranny, I
 " am compelled to pronounce the punishment
 " of *death*."

Pons de Verdun. " Louis has gone beyond
 " the bounds of his constitutional inviolabi-
 " lity. I see the same difference between
 " those crimes provided for by that constitu-
 " tion which he first annihilated, and those
 " of which he has rendered himself guilty, as
 " between poisoning and assassination. By ex-
 " ceeding the measure of the crime, the pu-
 " nishment incurred ought to be the greater.
 " The King as an individual has placed him-
 " self, with regard to punishment, on a foot-
 " ing with unprivileged conspirators, for
 " with regard to criminality he has been al-
 " ways privileged. He is more criminal than
 " they. Should this be a reason for treat-
 " ing him with less severity? The rights of
 " man loudly exclaim against such injustice.
 " They would reproach me with disguising
 " it under the name of policy; with cover-
 " ing it under the pusillanimous pretence of
 " false incompetence; and weakly should I

“ suffer myself to be frightened with vain
 “ phantoms. Louis has been accused by the
 “ whole nation of having conspired against it.
 “ We have declared him guilty. My con-
 “ science bids me open the penal code. It
 “ pronounces against Louis the sentence of
 “ *death*, which several of his accomplices have
 “ already suffered.”

J. B. Lacaste, du Cantal. “ The tyrant,
 “ while alive, is like a light-house to our
 “ internal and external enemies—When dead
 “ he will be a terror to the combined kings
 “ and their satellites. His ghost will discon-
 “ cert the projects of traitors, put an end to
 “ faction and disturbance, give peace to the
 “ Republic, and at length destroy those pre-
 “ judices which have too long disturbed man-
 “ kind. The tyrant has been declared guilty
 “ of the greatest of crimes—of attempting to
 “ enslave the nation. The law pronounces
 “ death against such an attempt. Submissive
 “ to the law, I vote for *death*.”

Robespierre. “ Because you have esta-
 “ blished yourselves the judges of Louis with-
 “ out the usual forms, are you less his
 “ judges? You cannot separate your quality
 “ of judge from that of legislator. These
 “ two

“ two characters are indivisible. You have
 “ acknowledged the crimes of the tyrant. It
 “ is your duty to punish them. No confi-
 “ deration should make you hesitate respect-
 “ ing the punishment reserved for the greatest
 “ criminal that ever existed. I vote the pu-
 “ nishment of *death*.”

Danton. “ I am a republican, and do not
 “ hesitate respecting the choice of that pu-
 “ nishment reserved for Louis the last. You
 “ ought, to strike a terror into tyrants. I
 “ vote for the punishment of *death*.”

Robert. “ I vote for *death*: and if any
 “ regret remains, it is, that my sentence
 “ does not extend to all tyrants. I would
 “ condemn them all to *death*.”

Freron. “ Were it possible that the ma-
 “ jority should pronounce only imprisonment,
 “ I would move that a veil might be thrown
 “ over the bust of *Brutus*. I vote for *death*.”

Barrere. “ The tree of liberty does not
 “ flourish unless moistened with the blood of
 “ kings. I vote for *death*.”

Egalité. “ Those who have made, or may
 “ make attempts against the sovereignty of
 “ the people, deserve death. I vote for
 “ *death*.”

Jean de Brie. “ I pronounce the *death* of
 “ the tyrant, because I consider his death as
 “ the death-blow to faction.”

Lakanal. “ A Republican is a man of few
 “ words. The motives of my opinion are here
 “ —(laying his hand on his breast)—I vote
 “ for *death*.”——But enough. To doom a
 fellow creature, in cold blood, to *death*, on
 such pretences as these! May Heaven long
 preserve to my country wiser and more righte-
 ous tribunals!

*The sentiments expressed in the paper which
 he composed immediately previous to his death,
 &c. Page 13. l. 16.*—As far as this publica-
 tion can preserve and extend the knowledge
 of that affecting memorial of a good prince, it
 shall be done. I therefore subjoin a transla-
 tion of it.

“ IN the name of the Most Holy Trinity,
 the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,
 this day, the 21st of December, 1792, I,
 Louis the XVI. of the name, King of France,
 having been for more than four months im-
 prisoned with my family in the tower of the
 temple at Paris, by those who were my sub-
 jects, and deprived of all communication what-
 soever, ever since the 11th instant, with my
 own

own family ; moreover, being implicated in a trial of which it is impossible to foresee the issue, on account of the passions of men, and for which no pretext or means can be found in any existing law ; having only God for the witness of my thoughts, and to whom I can address myself, I here declare, in his presence, my last will and sentiments.

“ I leave my soul to God, my Creator ; I pray him to receive it in mercy, and not to judge it according to its deserts, but according to those of our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself a sacrifice to God his father, for us men, however unworthy, and for me the most unworthy. I die in the communion of our mother, the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, who holds her powers by an uninterrupted succession from St. Peter, to whom Jesus Christ entrusted them. I firmly believe and acknowledge every thing contained in the commandments of God and the church, the sacraments and mysteries, such as the church teaches and hath always taught them ; I have never pretended to make myself a judge of the different modes of explaining the dogmas which divide the church of Jesus Christ, but I have conformed, and will
always

always conform, if God grant me life, to the decisions which the higher ecclesiastics of the Holy Catholic Church give, and shall give, conformably to the discipline of the church followed since Jesus Christ. I lament, with all my heart, our brethren who may be in error, but I pretend not to judge them, and I love them no less in Jesus Christ according to what Christian charity teaches us; I pray God to pardon me all my sins; I have endeavoured to know them scrupulously, to detest them, and to humble myself in his presence. Not being able to avail myself of the ministry of a Catholic priest, I pray God to receive the confession which I have made, and above all my profound repentance for having put my name (though it was against my will) to acts which may be contrary to the discipline and belief of the Catholic church, to which I have always remained sincerely united in heart; I pray God to accept of my firm resolution, if he grant me life, to make use as soon as I can of the ministry of a Catholic Priest to confess myself of all my sins, and to receive the sacrament of repentance; I request all those whom I may have offended through inadvertence, for I do not recollect having knowingly offended any
one,

one, or those to whom I may have given bad example or scandal, to forgive me the evil which they think I have done them.

“ I entreat all charitable persons to join their prayers with mine to obtain of God the pardon of my sins.

“ I forgive, with all my heart, those who have made themselves my enemies without my having given them any cause; and I pray God to forgive them, as well as those who, through a false or mistaken zeal, have done me much evil.

“ I recommend to God my wife, my children, my sister, my aunts, my brothers, and all those who are attached to me by the ties of blood, or in any other manner whatsoever. I pray God particularly to look with the eyes of mercy on my wife, my children, and my sister, who have long been the partners of my sufferings; to sustain them by his grace, if they should lose me; and as long as they shall remain in this perishable world. I recommend my children to my wife; I have never doubted her maternal tenderness for them. I recommend to her, above all, to make them good Christians, and honest members of society; to make them consider the grandeurs
of

of this world, if they are condemned to prove them, but as things dangerous and perishable, and to turn their views towards the only and solid glory of eternity. I request my sister to continue her tenderness to my children, and to be a mother to them, if they should have the misfortune to lose their own.

“ I entreat my wife to forgive me all the evils which she suffers on my account, and the uneasiness which I may have caused her in the course of our union ; as she may be assured, that I remember nothing against her, if she thinks she has any thing to reproach herself with.

“ I earnestly recommend to my children, next to their duty to God, which they ought to prefer to every thing, to maintain mutual union, submission, and obedience, to their mother, and gratitude for all the cares which she incurs for them, and in memory of me.

“ I entreat them to consider my sister as a second mother. I recommend to my son, if he should have the misfortune to become king, to think that he owes himself entirely to the good of his fellow citizens ; that he ought to forget all hatred and all resentment, and especially whatever relates to the misfortunes and
uneasiness

uneasiness which I experience; that he cannot promote the good of the people but by reigning according to the laws; but, at the same time, that a king cannot make the laws respected, and do the good he wishes, but in proportion as he has the necessary authority; and that, without this, being fettered in his operations, and inspiring no respect, he is more injurious than useful. I recommend to my son to take care of all the persons who were attached to me, as far as his circumstances shall give him the means; to think that this is a sacred debt which I have contracted to the children or relations of those who have died for me, and next, to those who are unfortunate on my account. I know that there are many persons of those who were attached to me, who have not conducted themselves towards me as they ought, and who have even shewn me ingratitude; but I forgive them (often, in the moments of trouble and effervescence, a man is not master of himself); and I entreat my son, if he should have the opportunity, to remember only their misfortunes. I could wish to be able to testify my gratitude to those who have displayed a true and disinterested attachment to me. On
the

the one hand, if I was sensibly affected by the ingratitude and disloyalty of persons to whom I had never shewn any thing but favours to them, their relations, or friends ; on the other, I have had the consolation of seeing the gratuitous attachment and interest which many persons have shewn to me. I entreat them to accept of my thanks ; in the situation in which things still are, I should be afraid of bringing them into danger, if I were to speak more explicitly ; but I recommend particularly to my son to seek all occasions of discovering them.

“ I should, nevertheless, think that I calumniated the sentiments of the nation, did I not openly recommend to my son M. M. de Chamilly and Hu, whom their true attachment to me induced to shut themselves up with me in this mournful residence, and who were near being the unhappy victims of what they did. I also recommend to him Cleri, with whose attention I have had every reason to be satisfied since he has been with me. As it is he who has remained with me to the last, I request M. M. of the *Commune*, to deliver to him my clothes, my books, my watch, my purse, and the other little effects which have
been

been deposited at the Council of the Commons.

“ I also most willingly forgive those who guarded me, the ill-treatment and severity which they thought it their duty to make me suffer. I have found some feeling and compassionate souls ; may they enjoy the tranquillity of heart, which must spring from their manner of thinking.

“ I entreat M. M. De Malesherbes, Tronchet, and Deseze, to receive here my thanks; and the expression of my sensibility, for all the care and all the pains which they took for me.

“ I conclude by declaring, in the presence of God, and ready to appear before him, that I reproach myself with none of the crimes which are alledged against me.

“ Done in duplicate at the Tower of the Temple, December 25, 1792.

(Signed) “ LOUIS.”

(A true copy) Baudrais, Municipal Officer.

She has forgotten that it was Louis who severed America from her, &c. Page 14. l. 13.

—The Queen of France's party, it is well known, forced on the King the treaty with

America, in the view of depressing Great Britain. Louis considered it as an unfair and ungenerous measure, and threw away the pen when urged to sanction it with his signature. But in an evil hour for himself and his family, he relented, on repeated importunity; he signed the fatal instrument which involved both hemispheres in the horrors of war, and in so doing, he remotely signed the warrant for his own execution. Another lesson to princes!

694. h 13.
2

AN
EPISTOLATORY DISCOURSE,
CONTAINING,
BESIDES OTHER INCIDENTAL MATTERS,
A
NEW RESOLUTION AND IMPROVEMENT,
BOTH
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL,
OF THE
GRAND APOCALYPTICAL QUESTION
CONCERNING
THE RISE AND FALL OF ROME PAPAL.

Ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα
ὥς ἐσιν ἡ κεφαλὴ, ὁ Χριστός. EPH. IV. 15.

THE
LIST

OF THE
MEMBERS

OF THE
SOCIETY

FOR THE
IMPROVEMENT

OF THE
MIND

AND
THE
BODY

OF
THE
HUMAN
MIND

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN LORD CARMICHAEL,

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE KINGDOM
OF SCOTLAND,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY
COUNCIL,

AND CHANCELLOR OF THE COLLEGE OF GLASGOW.

MY LORD,

THE honour I have in being related to your Lordship, and the happiness I enjoy in being acquainted with you, do not only encourage me to prefix your Lordship's name to the following Discourse, but allow me also to believe you will not take it amiss that I do so. And since you have so lately laid me under new ties to your Lordship, in de-

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signing

signing my promotion to so considerable an office as that of Principal of the College of *Glasgow*, I find myself obliged to lay hold on this first opportunity of declaring to the world the grateful sense I have of so great and undeserved a favour; and the rather, because my circumstances have not allowed me the satisfaction of complying with so kind and generous an offer. But seeing it is to my own loss and disadvantage only, that I have declined so very honourable and beneficial a place, and that therefore I must be supposed to have acted thus from considerations of another nature, I know your Lordship will judge, from the true regard you have to conscience yourself, that some straitening circumstances of this kind must have been (as indeed they were) the only *remora* that prevented my being so happy as your Lordship designed I should; and that therefore you will not be displeased

pleased with me for what was not my fault, but my misfortune.

I am not made for flattery, and I know your Lordship is above it; and therefore I shall not say any thing here by way even of just encomium; because as your character is so public that it needs it not, so your modesty is so great, that I know any attempt of this kind would be unwelcome and uneasy to you.

I shall therefore only tell your Lordship, that, as I question not but you have the good wishes of all honest men that know you, so I reckon myself peculiarly obliged to beg of God, that you may long be preserved jointly to serve God and your prince, the church and your country, with the same unshaken constancy, unbiaſſed fidelity, and unspotted reputation, that you have hitherto been honoured to do.—Which, and

that God may bless you and your honourable family with all spiritual and temporal mercies here, and with eternal felicity and glory at last, is, and shall be, the earnest and constant prayer of,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obliged,

and most obedient servant,

ROBERT FLEMING.

AN
EPISTOLATORY DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PAPACY.

TO ALL MY TRUE AND GOOD FRIENDS EVERY
WHERE ; BUT MORE PARTICULARLY TO
THE WORTHY GENTLEMEN AND OTHERS
THAT COMPOSE THE CHURCH TO WHICH
I AM NOW RELATED AS MINISTER.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

IN compliance with the frequent
and repeated desires of a great many of you,
I suffer the *following Discourses* to break loose
from their *fellows*, to take their fortune, as
we use to say, in the wide world. And,
seeing the candour of so many of my friends
has made them think they might not be un-
useful, I must therefore expect that they will,

D 4

from

from the same principle, defend this publication of them against the censures they may be supposed to fall under both from open enemies and pretended friends. For, though it be a common, and as it were a threadbare argument, to plead importunity in this case, yet it is sufficiently known to several of you, that if it had not been for this, the world had not been troubled with any thing further of this kind from me. For as I am sure no affectation to be more known or taken notice of has influenced me to present these Discourses to public view, so I do suppose it is not unknown to some of you, that retirement from this noisy and vain world has ever been the sum of my ambition, excepting when public work and service have obliged me to shake off the beloved fetters of so dear a confinement.

I shall not therefore say more as to the following Essays, than to tell you (what many of you know already), that as the *first* of the *Discourses* that follow this *prefatory one*, gave rise to the publishing of the *second*, so the *second* gave occasion to the printing of the *third*; and therefore, seeing the late opportunity of preaching, when we entered into our new meeting-place here in *London*, September

29, 1700, did induce some of you to desire the publication also of that sermon I preached when I entered upon the pastoral and ministerial work among you June 19, 1698, the same occasion has given birth to the last additional Discourse, which some remember I made when I was solemnly set apart to the ministerial office, February 9, 1687, which I have the rather consented to print now, because it doth not only suit with the second Discourse, but because I remember several false, or at least imperfect, copies were taken of it when I did at first deliver it.

And seeing the last Discourse (which yet was the first as to time) doth now appear in the view of the world, I found myself in some sort obliged to interest *all my friends* in this prefatory address: wherein I do particularly include those of the *English Church of Leyden* and *Scots Church* in Rotterdam, to whom I stood related successively as minister or pastor; whom I do the rather mention here, that I may let them know how much they are still upon my thoughts, though we are separated as to place.

But seeing my work is now more particularly appropriated to you, whom I am more immediately

immediately concerned with and related unto at present, I do therefore, in a more special manner, address myself to *you* at this time. And I hope you will bear with me, if from my sincere respect for your welfare, I detain you a while here before ye enter upon the perusal either of my *Apocalyptical Thoughts following*, or the *other Discourses*, which I do present you with, at your own desire. For in case either of death, or being otherwise rendered incapable to serve you, I am willing to give a vent to my thoughts and affection at this time, that, whatever comes of me, the following Discourses, together with this, may stand as a lasting witness of my real concern for your souls welfare.

In the first place, therefore, I do declare, that though I am not willing to state my sufferings upon little matters or modes of worship and expression; yet I can sincerely say, that should the divine Providence call me to lay down my life for the *truths themselves* which I have preached among you, I hope I should be so far from quarrelling with the procedure of God this way, that I should rejoice in such a martyrdom. And, as I hope I have not contradicted in my life what I have
preached

preached in the pulpit, whatever my infirmities may have been ; so I presume it will not be looked upon as pride or vanity, if I say with the great Apostle (though as to the last clause I do not pretend to have been any pattern to you), “ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are venerable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.”

For, in the *next place*, I thank God, that he that knows the secrets of all hearts, doth testify together with my conscience, that a sincere concern to be useful to our common Christianity, was the thing that did at first influence me to enter upon this great work of the ministry, and hath ever since engaged me, though under more discouragements than most men, to continue and labour in it. So that it is matter of sweet reflection to me, that I never gave any occasion to brand our holy profession with the odious name of priestcraft,

craft, whatever any others may have done. For, as I have had no other ambition than to engage and draw men over to the great and catholic interests of Christianity itself, in order to their becoming the followers and servants of our glorious God and blessed Saviour, so I am sure I can confidently say, without any vanity or affectation (for which I dare appeal not only to you, but all others that have known me ever since I began to preach), that there is not one in the world that ever had just occasion so much as to think that I did at any time attempt to bring any person over to my way as a party. And, as thus I have been far from seeking either honour, interest, or popularity, so there are not a few that can bear me witness, that I have incurred the censures of some men of very different denominations, because I could never be induced to think that religion did properly stand in the rituals of any of the contending parties.

The differences therefore, but especially the animosities, that are among Protestant Christians, have ever been grievous and afflictive to me, and to heal these I could cheerfully be offered up a sacrifice, if I can be supposed to be conscious of the sentiments and movements

movements of my own soul. For though we of this congregation differ from all others that dissent from the episcopal communion in this, that we are, in a peculiar sense, upon a National Foundation, *viz.* in as far as we not only own the same church government, but keep up the same way that the church of *Scotland* useth in her public administrations; to which most of us belong as natives, and all of us as proselytes; yet I must publicly own, that abstracting from this, I am a dissenter from that party that engross and monopolize the name of the church of *England*. For, though I have ever looked upon other controversies as more edifying and momentous than those unhappy ones which have kept that great body and ours divided, yet I have so far considered them, as hitherto to find no reason to quit the way I was educated in, notwithstanding the specious reasons made use of to prejudice people against us as *schismatics*, rather than to convince us that we are so.

Therefore, in the *third place*, I cannot but own (without any design to reflect upon them that differ from me in such matters) that I look upon that way as nearest to the Christian institution, which has the fewest and most natural

tural and unaffected, and consequently most spiritual rites and ceremonies, in the performance of gospel ordinances. For as a * learned conformist says, in a book which he did afterwards indeed seem to differ from, but never attempted to retract or refute, and perhaps was never able to do: “ Certainly, the primitive church, that did not charge men with such a load of articles as now in these latter ages men are charged with, would much less have burdened men with imposing doubtful practices upon them as the ground of church communion. There is nothing then that the primitive church deserves more imitation in by us, than that admirable temper, moderation, and condescension, which was used in it towards all the members of it. It was never thought worth the while to make any standing laws for rites and customs, that had no other original but tradition, much less to suspend men from her communion for not observing them.” And if this was the practice of the primitive church, it was eminently so in the apostolical age; *to whom, as actuated by the Holy Ghost, it seemed good to require no-*

* *Stilling. Iren.* page 122, and 68.

thing by way of imposition, but a very few *necessary things*, viz. that Christians should abstain *from idols, blood, things strangled, and fornication*. But alas! since that time it hath seemed good to men (but I am sure not to the Holy Spirit) to impose a great many unnecessary things on the consciences of others, without any such allowance as was given them, *that every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind in what he did*. For what regard have some men to this apostolical rule, when their impositions are laid as *stumbling-blocks in their brethren's way*, without any regard to the wounding of their weak consciences, upon the supposition they are so? Is this to imitate the apostle's tenderness, who resolved rather *never to eat flesh, than to offend any weak brother*? Or do men this way seek the things of *Jesus Christ*, or their own private ends and emoluments most?

Therefore let men dispute about forms and ceremonies, and their decency or necessity, as long as they please; I must say, with * a reverend conforming minister: " That all

* See P. M. in his vanity, mischief, and danger of ceremonies, proposed to the Convocation, and printed anno 1690.

“ the art and power of the world cannot
 “ make trifles in the worship of God seem
 “ matters of importance to them that relish
 “ heaven. What trumpery are habits, va-
 “ rious gestures, and postures, to a man who
 “ is swallowed up in the contemplation of
 “ the infinite Majesty of the glorious God?
 “ or who is lost in the ravishing admiration
 “ of his goodness and love? or who is sunk
 “ into the lowest abasements and self-abhor-
 “ rence for his sins? Such a soul may be
 “ loaded with human inventions, but he can
 “ never look upon them as ornaments or
 “ helps to devotion.”

Whatever then be the various ideas and
 theories of what we call edification; yet still,
 as none can dispute us out of what we receive
 most advantage from, as to our bodies, so
 neither as to our souls. For if no man can
 be able to persuade me, that his constitution
 of body is such a standard to mankind, that I
 and all others are obliged to reckon that food
 most healthful for us, which the imposer tells
 us is so to him, though at the same time we
 experience it to be noxious or disagreeable to
 us: I know no more reason why any man
 should pretend a power of imposing modes
 and

and forms, on my conscience, which I am dissatisfied with, from no other reason but this, that they appear to be the most excellent or decent to him; so that, as liberty is equally necessary in the one case as in the other, unless we value the health of our bodies above the peace of our consciences and security of our souls; so the contrary practice, when force is used, can admit of no softer term than that of Anti-Christian tyranny. I cannot therefore but highly approve of what I find in a * book I have already mentioned: "What possible reason
 " can be given," says the author, "why
 " such things should not be sufficient for
 " communion with a church which are sufficient for salvation? And certainly these
 " things are sufficient for that, which are laid
 " down as the necessary duties of Christianity
 " by our Lord and Saviour in his word."

I mention these things, God is my witness, for no private design, to uphold a party, or to serve the ends of it *as such*; but to let those that are prejudiced against us know that we are actuated by religion as a principle, and not as a notion only; and that this is the reason of our dissent from those that share

* *Stillings. Iren. pref. page 8.*

the emoluments of the church among them. Otherwise it were not probable that we should unite in acting contrary to our own interest, merely from faction or humour, if we may presume to know our own sentiments; and I hope most, if not all of us, durst not dissemble before the great God all our days, in a matter of so great importance as this is. So that the dissenting of so many persons from the established church to their own hurt and disadvantage in the world, may be looked upon as no contemptible argument by unbiassed persons, that there are some men that are actuated by religion as a principle, and that take up the ministry otherwise than as a trade.

But I had this further design in touching upon our unhappy differences; that, considering that they do only concern the externals and circumstantials of religion, both ye and all others that peruse these lines and the following discourses, may be taken off from that fury and bigotry, by which so many seem to be possessed at this day, and may learn to mind the great essentials of Christianity more, acting conscientiously yourselves in all things, and judging charitably of those
that

that differ from you, whether they do so of you or not. For what I have said on this head, is not in the least designed to reflect upon those that differ from us, among whom I acknowledge there are many distinguishable, not only for parts and learning, but for piety and moderation also, upon which account I cannot but honour and love them, though they should both despise and hate me. Nay I question not, but even many of the bigots for cathedral worship and its annexed hierarchy, (who are for running up these to as near a conformity to Rome as they can, and yet stamp all with a confident pretending to a *jus divinum*) may act from conscience even in their uncharitableness to them that conscientiously differ from them, yea in their hatred of them, and rage against them where they have power. But then it must be remembered, that as their zeal is not according to knowledge, so they are of the same tribe with those of whom our Saviour speaks when he tells us, *That they would persecute, yea, kill his servants*, when they had opportunity, *believing*, at the same time, *that they did God most acceptable service*. But he immediately adds, *and these things will they do because*

they have not known the Father nor me. However my design is not to reflect even on them, but rather to pity them, and wish them more knowledge and a better mind.

For as a contentious, and especially a persecuting temper, was never from God, nor according to the rule of the meek and holy Jesus, whose religion is *first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated*; so such a disposition was never more unseasonable than at this time. For they must be unaccountably unobservant of, and unconcerned with the present state and posture of affairs in *Europe*, who see not in what danger the protestant interest is at present, considering what it has lost already, and is in hazard of losing further; together with the sad decay of true Christian piety, as well as unity, among all sorts of persons. I could therefore wish we might learn a little prudence, even from our popish adversaries, that we might unite in love, and in design to promote a general interest, though we attain not to an exact uniformity in all things. For why should not we join as one soul against that bloody and idolatrous party, when we see them do so against us? Though their various sects and
orders,

orders, such as *Franciscans, and Dominicans, Jesuits, and Jansenists*, differ as much from one another both in their opinions and in their form and habits, (as they are regimented under their several heads or generals, and as they live according to vastly different laws and rules) as we can possibly be supposed to do. But alas! what moral prognostications have we now, but such as seem to portend ruin and misery to us? When we see the differences of parties grow up into a stated hatred, with a fixed design to ruin one another, and consequently murder the reformed cause, which we are obliged not only upon religious accounts to appear for, but even upon civil considerations, seeing popery is inconsistent with freedom and liberty, than which nothing, in this world, ought to be so dear to us. Can we have forgot what barbarities that inhuman party have committed in the world? For if we may believe historians*, says a learned man, “Pope Julius in seven years
 “ was the occasion of the slaughter of
 “ 200,000 Christians. The *massacre in France*
 “ cut off 100,000 in three months. P. Pe-

* Dr. More in his *Divine Dialogues*, page 161. See also his *Mystery of Iniquity*, lib. 2. chap. 15, 16, &c.

“ rionius avers, that in the persecution of
 “ the *Albigenses and Waldenses*, 1,000,000 lost
 “ their lives. From the beginning of the
 “ *Jesuits* till 1580, that is, 30 or 40 years,
 “ 900,000 perished, saith *Balduinus*. The
 “ *Duke of Alva* by the hangman put 36,000
 “ to death. *Vergerius* affirms, that the in-
 “ *quisition* in 30 years destroyed 150,000.
 “ To all this I may add the *Irish rebellion*, in
 “ which 300,000 were destroyed, as the
 “ *Lord Orrery* reports in a paper printed in
 “ the reign of *Charles II.*” And how many
 have been destroyed in the late persecutions
 in *France and Piedmont*, in the *Palatinate and*
Hungary, none, I believe, can fully reckon
 up, besides those that are, or have been in
 the galleys, and that have fled. This is that
 idolatrous harlot, so glutted with the blood
 of the saints, which a late author, in his *Trea-*
tise of Convocations, sets up as a pattern to the
 church of *England*, and which another author,
 in his book, entitled, *The Case of the Regale*
and Pontificate (to the scandal of the church
 of *England*, for whom they pretend such a
 zeal), would so fain have us united unto, and
 represents therefore in such favourable colours.
 But I hope all true protestants will easily see

the

the snake in the grass. And surely when we are in hazard of being betrayed within ourselves, we have sufficient reason to awake out of our lethargic sleep, that we may do what possibly we can to save the nations we belong to from approaching desolations; or if that cannot be, that we may at least save our own souls in the day of the Lord. For seeing we are like to feel the effects of the new conjunction of *France* and *Spain*, the election of a young politic pope, and the apostacy of some protestant princes to the *Romish* interest (which, together with the impieties and scepticism of a great many within ourselves, are, I am sure, no good prognostics), have we not just reason to prepare for remarkable revolutions? While therefore I think of these things, I cannot forbear to give a vent to my thoughts on the great and dark head of futurity, in presenting you with some conjectures in relation to our times, founded upon scripture prophecy, as far as I understand it.

Therefore seeing this is the chief design of this Discourse, which I have inscribed to you, I hope you will bear with me in giving you some brief account of the times we are fallen

in, and what we may expect if we live much longer. Which I am the rather induced to do, because we are just now entering upon a *new age*, from which we look back upon *seventeen centuries*, which have elapsed since our blessed Redeemer came into the world, and may therefore be allowed to conjecture, with some just grounds perhaps of probability (for I do industriously avoid the fatal rock of positiveness, which so many apocalyptical men have suffered themselves to split upon), what part of the Revelation remains yet to be accomplished.

But since I am to confine myself to a little compass here, as remembering I am writing no book properly, but an epistolatory Discourse, prefatory to those that follow, with which therefore it must keep some proportion; I shall content myself in giving you a few hints towards the *Resolution and Improvement* of that grand Apocalyptical Question, *When the Reign of Anti-Christianism or the Papacy began?*

There are *two things*, therefore, which lie before me to be considered at this time.

I. I must fulfil my promise in giving you
a new Resolution of the grand Apocalyptical Question

tion concerning the Rise of the great Anti-Christ or Rome Papal. For when we have done this, and fixed this æra or epocha, we may by an easy consequence see *the time of the final fall and destruction of this dreadful enemy.*

II. I must in the next place *improve* the resolution of this question both *theoretically*, as a key to unriddle the dark apocalyptical times and periods, and *practically*, in order both to the regulation of your thoughts, and the government of your lives in some very weighty considerations deducible from thence.

The first thing therefore which I have to do, is to attempt the *resolution* of the principal apocalyptical question *concerning the rise of Anti-Christianism.*

Now, in order to answer this distinctly (which hath exercised and wearied out all apocalyptical writers hitherto), there are some things I would premise as so many *postulata*, which generally all are agreed in, and which Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Mr. Durham, and Dr. Cressener, have irrefragably proved. 1. *That the Revelation contains the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the state of the Christian church to the end of the world.* 2. *That mystical Babylon, or the great whore described*

described there, doth signify Rome in an Anti-Christian church state. 3. That therefore this cannot be Rome Pagan properly, but Rome Papal. 4. That the seven heads of the beast, or the seven heads of the kings, are the seven forms of government which obtained successively among the Romans; and seeing the sixth of these was that which was only in being in John's time (the former five having fallen before), that therefore, consequently, the seventh head, which under another consideration is called the eighth (the intervenient kingdom of the Ostro-Goths being the seventh in number, though not properly Roman, and therefore, in that sense, none of the heads of the Roman government), is the last species of government, and that which is called most peculiarly and by a specialty the Beast or Anti-Christ.

These *postulata* being supposed as certain (which I would reckon no difficult thing to prove, were it needful), I must in the next place premise *two preliminary considerations*, before I come directly to answer the question itself.

The first is this, *That the three grand apocalyptic numbers of 1260 days, 42 months, and time, times, and a half, are not only syn-*
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chronical,

chronical, but must be interpreted prophetically, so as years must be understood by days.

That these three numbers are synchronical will appear plain to any impartial considerer, that will be at the pains to compare them as we have them set down in this book of the Revelation, viz. 1260 *days*, chap. xi. 3, and chap. xii. 6; the 42 *months*, chap. xi. 2, and chap. xiii. 5; and the *time, times, and an half*, chap. xii. 14. For it is clear that *the Gentiles treading down the holy city 42 months*, chap. xi. 2, is the cause of the *witnesses prophesying for 1260 days in sackcloth*, v. 3; and is not the *woman or churches being in the wilderness* for the same term of days, chap. xii. 6, any other than a new representation of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth? Seeing this must be while the beast is worshipped and served by the whole *Roman* world, during mens' lunacy, of 42 months continuance, chap. xiii. 5; and therefore seeing the woman is said to be in the wilderness state of desolation and persecution for a time, and times, and half a time, in order thus to be preserved from the beast and serpent, as we see chap. xii. 14; it is likewise plain that this number of three years and a half must
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be the very same with the two former numbers. Only it is to be observed by the way, that this period of time, when it is mentioned in relation to the church, is spoken of with respect to the sun, either as to his diurnal or annual rotation; whereas when it is described in relation to the beast's unstable kingdom of night and darkness, it is made mention of with respect to the inconstant luminary, which changes its face continually, while it makes our months. And hence it is that the church is represented, chap. xii. 1, under the emblem of *a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet.*

Now as these numbers are synchronical, and the same; so it is easy to prove that they must be understood prophetically for years. I shall not insist here upon the conjecture of a learned man *, that there was no diurnal rotation of the earth before the Fall, and consequently no days of 24 hours, but only an annual rotation of this our planetary world; which he gives us as the original reason of the Scriptures putting days for years frequently. For whatever be in this, it is plain that the scripture

* *Whiston's Theory of the Earth*, page 8, 79, 81. See *Hypoth.* 3.

speaks thus in several places ; by putting a lesser number figuratively for a greater, as well as a definite for an indefinite. Witness the appointment of the *week of years*, Exod. xxxiii. 10, 11, which is spoken of as it were a *week of days*, verse 12 ; the *seventh year* of which is therefore called *Sabbatical*, with respect to the *Seventh Day Sabbath*. In the same way of speaking, *Ezekiel* was commanded to lie 390 days on his left side, and 40 on his right, *each day for a year*, as God himself says, chap. iv. 5, 6. So likewise God punished the murmuring *Israelites* with 40 years abode in the wilderness, with relation to the 40 days that were spent in searching of the land of Canaan, Num. xiv. 32. The seven years of *Nebuchadnezzar's Lycanthropy* is thus called, indefinitely, *days or times*, Dan. iv. 32, 34. Nay, our Saviour himself speaks in this dialect when he calls the years of his ministry days, saying, *I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected*, Luke xiii. 32. But the most remarkable place to our purpose is, the famous prophecy of *Daniel's* 70 weeks or 490 days, chap. ix. 24, reaching down from the edict of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, in his 20th year, Neh. ii. 1—10,

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to our Saviour's suffering at *Jerusalem*; which was exactly 490 *prophetical years*, not *Julian* ones: the not distinguishing of which has hitherto confounded all interpreters, as I might shew at large, were this a proper place for it. But what the difference between these is, we shall quickly see. In the mean time, I am now to prove, that the 1260 *days* are to be understood, in a *prophetical sense*, for *years*; for if I can prove this, it will necessarily follow, that the other numbers must be so interpreted also, since they are the same with this. Now that the 1260 *days* cannot be taken *literally*, but prophetically, will appear from hence, that it is impossible to conceive how so many great and wonderful actions, which are prophesied to fall out in that short time, could happen during the space of *three solar years and an half*; such as, for example, the obtaining power over all kindreds, tongues, and nations; the world's wondering at and submitting unto the beast's reign; and the setting up an image to the imperial head, and causing it to be worshipped, instead of the living emperors, &c. And besides these things, seeing the 1260 *days* are the whole time of the papal authority, which is not to be totally destroyed until

til the great and remarkable appearance of Christ, upon the pouring out of the seventh vial; and that therefore Christ will have the honour of destroying him finally himself, (though this iniquity began to work even in the apostolical times); therefore we may certainly conclude that it must take up some centuries of years to carry on this abomination, that maketh desolate. For though *the Lord will gradually consume or waste this great adversary by the Spirit of his mouth, yet he will not sooner abolish him than by the appearing of his own presence*, 2 Theff. ii. 8, as * I choose both to render and understand the words.

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* The learned Dr. *Whitby*, in his late *Paraphrase and Commentary upon the Epistles*, does indeed advance a new notion on this *verse and chapter*, viz. that the *Jewish* sanhedrim, government, and nation, is primarily and chiefly understood here by the apostle as the man of sin and Anti-Christ, both upon the account of their opposing themselves to Christ and persecuting of his followers, and upon the account also of their rebelling against the *Romans*. And he has said so much for the proof of this, that it may be thought to contain a refutation of my interpretation of the place. But even upon the supposition, that all that the Doctor says for his opinion should be true, yet it will be found no way to invalidate what I advance here. For all that are acquainted with the *Jewish* and apostolical writings know,
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The second preliminary consideration is, *that in order to understand the prophetical years aright, we must reduce them to Julian years, or such as are in use with us now in Europe.*

This is no idle or chimerical enquiry, seeing the ignorance of this has misled all our great apocalyptical men hitherto in their calculations; and yet, unless we are able to adjust the difference between prophetical and

that besides a first sense to be observed in prophecies, there is a *second and remoter* one more tacitly insinuated frequently, as the principal design of the Spirit of God. I might shew this in innumerable instances, especially in the ancient prophecies that relate to *David*, or some other person, in the *first sense* or *typical one*, but to the Messiah *ultimately and completely*. But I shall not insist upon any thing of this kind now, seeing so many have done it already; and there is no need to do it here, seeing Dr. *Whitby* himself doth grant all I desire, when he says in his *preface* to this *Epistle*, page 383, “ But that I may not wholly differ from my brethren in this matter, I grant these words may “ in a secondary sense, in which expression I only differ “ from the Doctor,” (seeing I look upon it to be the *principal sense*, because it is the *second*) “ be attributed to the “ *papal Anti-Christ* or *man of sin*, and may be signally fulfilled in him, in the destruction of him by the *Spirit of Christ’s mouth*, he being the successor to the *apostate Jewish church*, to whom these characters agree as well as “ to her; and therefore in the annotations I have still “ given a place to this interpretation also.”

Julian

Julian years, we must still reckon at a venture, without any certainty of the truth and exactness of our arithmetic. Therefore, that we may understand this difference, we are to remember, that the ancients were far more rude and indistinct in their calculation of time, than we have been since. And, indeed, such is their confusion this way, that we are obliged to God's Providence in giving us the exact compass of a prophetic year, even in this book, by fixing the *synchronism* of the *three numbers* above mentioned. For by these it is determined, that *30 days make a month, and 12 of such months a year*. So that 1260 days being divided into three years and a half, (or time and times and an half in the apocalyptical dialect) 360 days must make up a year, without the additional five days and odd hours and minutes that are added in the calculation of the *Julian* year. For the *Julian* (and *Gregorian*) months, consisting some of 30 and some of 31 days, (excepting *February* only) and the years consequently of 365 days; there must needs be some considerable difference in the revolution of many centuries. Which difference appears still greater if we consult the late curious astronomical calculations of

Petavius, Tycho, Kepler, and others. But since their exactness hath only added five hours to every year (together with some minutes, firsts, seconds, &c. *communibus annis*, which they themselves are not fully agreed in) I shall not be so nice on this point, as to follow them exactly in all their criticisms this way. However, since five hours additional to a year arise to an entire month in the revolution of 153 years, it ought not to be altogether neglected. But passing even these, and considering only the five days that are added to the 360, in our ordinary years, we will find that the 1260 days in the Revelation being reduced to years, are 18 years short of *Julian* years, in the prophetic reckoning, by reason of the additional days turned into years in the ordinary accounts now, above the apocalyptical reckoning. To demonstrate which, I present you with the following scheme.

<i>The Prophetical Year.</i>		<i>The Julian Year.</i>	
One	- - - - 360		365
			365
Two	- - - - 720		730
Three	- - - - 1080		1095
Half	- - - - 180		183
Three years and a half	1260		1278

Now

Now if, according to this computation, we subtract 1260 apocalyptic years from 1278 *Julian* or *Gregorian* ones, (I call them so *ore rotundo*, overlooking the smaller measures of time) there remain 18 years to be cut off.

To apply this therefore to our design. If we may suppose that Anti-Christ began his reign in the year 606, the additional 1260 years of his duration, were they *Julian* or ordinary years, would lead us down to the year 1866, as the last period of the seven-headed monster. But seeing they are prophetic years only, we must cast away 18 years, in order to bring them to the exact measure of time that the Spirit of God designs in this book. And thus the final period of papal usurpations (supposing that he did indeed rise in the year 666) must conclude with the year 1848.

And now that I have hinted at the time of Anti-Christ's rise, as the conclusion of the preliminary considerations, I must proceed to prove this to be in one sense the true era of the papal beast's reign. And here it is that I find myself extremely straitened in discoursing of so great a subject in so narrow a compass. All therefore that I can say here will

amount to a few short hints only, though perhaps no inconsiderable ones.

Seeing, therefore, as I said before in the *fourth postulatam*, it is plain from Rev. xvii.

10. *That the imperial government was the regnant head of the Roman beast at the time of the vision: we have only the two following heads to consider, as to their rise and duration. Let these things therefore be minded here.*

1. That the *seventh head or king of Rome*, (as I hinted before) whose character is, *that he was immediately to succeed to the imperial government, and to continue but a short space*, Rev. xvii. 10. That, I say, this government could be no other than that of *the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy*.

For it is plain, that the *imperial dignity* was extinguished in *Italy and in the western parts of the empire*, by *Odoacer the king of the Heruli*, who forced *Augustulus*, the last sprig of an emperor, to abdicate his throne and power, in the year 475, or 476 as others say. And though this *Odoacer* was soon destroyed by *Theodorick the king of the Ostro-Goths*, yet the same form of regal government was continued by *Theodorick* and his successors. And though this kingdom continued for near
80 years,

80 years, reckoning from *Odoacer* to *Teias*; yet the angel might justly call this a *short time*; for so it was if compared either with the preceding imperial or succeeding papal government. Which suggests a very strong argument against some who would make this seventh king to denote the oriental empire, which as it began long before this time, so lasted many centuries afterwards, and was not totally extinct till *Mahomet* the Great's time, in the year 1453. And surely this kingdom was sufficient to constitute a *new head* of the *Roman* people, seeing *Rome* and *Italy* were subjected entirely to those *Gothish* kings, and that they not only acted with the same authority that the emperors had used before (excepting that they abstained from that *title* by a special Providence, that they might not be confounded with that government) but were owned by the senate and people of *Rome* as their superiors, yea, by the emperors of the east also, as might easily be proved from *historians* *, particularly † *Cassiodorus*, who was

* See *Baron.* ad Ann. 472, 475, &c. *Petav.* Ration. Temp. lib. 7. cap. 5. *Bellarmin.* de Translat. Imp. Rom. lib. 1. cap. 9, &c.

† In Lib. Variarum, lib. 1. Ep. 23, 31, &c. lib. 4. Ep. 45, &c. lib. 3. Ep. 16, 18. lib. 8. Ep. 2, 3, 4, &c.

chief minister of state to two of those kings.

Whence it doth plainly appear, that this kingdom of the *Ostro-Goths* was the seventh head that was to continue a short time. And that therefore it follows, 1. That *the change wrought by Constantine the Great, both as to the seat and religion of the empire, could not be looked upon as a new head*, seeing the old government in all other respects was continued. And 2. Neither can any person justly suppose that *the form of the government was altered when the empire was divided into the east and west*; seeing in all other respects also the imperial authority and rule were preserved. Therefore, 3. It follows also *that the papal government was not regnant until the destruction of this Gothish kingdom in Italy*; for there could not be two supreme heads of *Rome* at the same time.

Therefore, 2. We may conclude that *the last head of the beast, which is the papal*, did arise either immediately upon the extirpation of the *Gothish* kingdom, or some time after. But it could not rise to its power immediately after, seeing *Justinian* did by the conquest of *Italy* revive the imperial government again
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there, which by that means *was healed* after the deadly wound which the Heruli and the Goths had given it. Though I confess *Justinian's* conquests of *Italy* laid a foundation for the pope's rise, and paved the way for his advancement, both by the *penal and sanguinary laws* which he made against all those that dissented from the *Romish* church, and by the confusions that followed upon *Narses*, his bringing in the *Lombards*. For during the struggles of them and the *Exarchat*, the pope played his game so, that the emperor *Phocas* found it his interest to engage him to his party, by giving him the title of *supreme and universal bishop*.

Therefore we may justly reckon that the *papal head* took its *first rise* from that remarkable year 606, when *Phocas* did in a manner devolve the government of the west upon him, by giving him the title of *universal bishop*; from which period if we date the 1260 years, they lead us down (as I said already) to the year 1866, which is 1848, according to prophetic calculation. Or if a bare title of this sort be not thought sufficient to constitute the pope head of the beast, we may reckon this two years later, *viz.* from the year 608, when

Boniface the *fourth* did first publicly authorize idolatry, by dedicating the *Pantheon* to the worship of the *Virgin Mary* and all the saints.

Now it is very remarkable, that in the year 666, pope *Vitalian* did first ordain that all public worship should be in Latin. And therefore, however the notion of * *Irenæus* has been of late ridiculed, who observed that the characteristical number of the beast, viz. 666, answering to the number of a man's name, was to be found in the word *Λατεινος*, from whence he concluded that he was to be a Roman, I cannot but think there is something remarkable in this (even though the numerical letters of other words should jump with this number also), not so much because of the antiquity of the notion, as upon account of the reason he suggests to us for this, when he says, that though he grants that other names (as that of *ἑωαβθας*) may be so rendered, yet he fixes upon this because the † *Latin monarchy* is

* *Iren.* adv. Hæret. lib. 5. cap. 30.

† It ought to be observed here, that not only the Greek word, but even the Hebrew contains the number 666, in the numerical letters thereof, whether we make use of

is the last of all, and therefore the beast must relate to this or none. Wherein I suppose he alludes to *Daniel's* account of the four monarchies, chap. ii. vii. And indeed the *little horn* that arose out of the head of the *fourth beast*, chap. vii. 8, seems not unfitly to represent not only *Antiochus Epiphanes*, but the *papal Anti-Christ*, whose type he may therefore be supposed to be. For as he supplanted

of רומית *Romana*, scil. *Sedes*, or רמנוש *Romanus* vel *Latinus*. As will appear from the following scheme.

ר	200	ר	200	Α	30
ו	6	מ	40	α	1
ס	40	ע	70	τ	300
י	10	נ	50	ς	5
י	10	ו	6	ι	10
ת	400	ש	300	ν	50
				ο	70
				ς	200
	666		666		666

And whereas *Bellarmin* objects, that *Latinus* should be rendered by a single *Iota* and not by *us*, he is exceedingly mistaken: for not only *Irenæus* renders the word thus, but all the *Greeks* do the same, as is plain in innumerable instances, such as in the names *Αντωνιος*, *Σαβινος*, which the *Romans* pronounce *Antoninus Sabinus*. Nay the ancient *Romans* spake the same way as the *Greeks*, as is plain in *Plautus* and the fragments of *Ennius*, with whom nothing is more common than *queis* for *quis*, *preimus* for *primus*, *capteivi* for *captivi*, *lateinei* for *latini*, &c.

three kings, in allusion to which that little horn is said to have plucked up *three horns* before it by the roots : so did the *papal government* rise also upon the ruins of the *Exarchat*, the *Lombards*, and the *authority of the emperors in Italy*.

I believe this account of Anti-Christ's rise will not be very acceptable to some, whose zeal for the pope's downfall has made them entertain hope of living to see that remarkable time ; which has made them invent plausible schemes to prove that this great enemy was seated in his regal dignity long before the year 606. But if a man will trace truth impartially, he will have reason to think, that the rise of this adversary could not be before that time. Nay I must tell you that I do not reckon the *full rise* of the pope to the headship of the empire till a later date still. For though the pope got the title of universal bishop at that time, yet he was afterwards for a long time subject in temporal concerns to the emperors ; and therefore I cannot reckon him to have been, in a proper and full sense, head of *Rome*, until he was so in a *secular* as well as *ecclesiastical sense*. And this was not until the days of *Pepin*, by whose consent he

was made a *secular prince*, and a great part of *Italy* given to him as *Peter's patrimony*. So that as *Boniface the third* (and his successors), by assuming the title of *universal bishop*, was the *forerunner of Anti-Christ*, as *Gregory the Great* prophesied he would be who should be known in the world by that proud title: so likewise we may conclude that *Anti-Christ* was indeed come, when *Paul the first* became a *temporal prince* also. *Phocas* therefore did only *proclaim* the *pope* to be the *last head of Rome* in the apocalyptical sense: but it was *Pepin* who gave him the *solemn investiture*, and *seated* him on *his throne*, which *Charlemagne* did afterwards confirm to him.

Now, as near as I can trace the time of this *donation of Pepin*, it was in or about the year 758, about the time that *pope Paul the first* began to build the *church of St. Peter and St. Paul*. Now if we make this the *æra of the papal kingdom*, the 1260 years will not run out before the year 2018, according to the computation of *Julian years*; but reducing these to *prophetical ones*, the expiration of the *papal kingdom* ends exactly in the year 2000, according to our vulgar reckoning. And if what I suggested above be true, that *Anti-Christ* shall not be finally destroyed until
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the *coming of Christ*, then may this calculation be looked upon to be very considerable. For it has been a very *ancient opinion*, that the world would last only *six thousand years*, that according to the old traditional prophecy of the *house of Elias*, the world should stand as many *millenaries* as it was made in days; and that therefore as there were *two thousand years from the creation to Abraham*, without a *written directory of religion*, and *two thousand from thence to Christ*, under the old economy of the law, so there would be *two thousand years more under the Messiah*. So that after the militant state of the Christian church is run out in the year 2000, it is to enter upon that glorious *Sabbatical millenary*, when the saints shall reign on the earth, in a peaceable manner, for a thousand years more. After the expiration of which, Satan shall be let loose to play a new game, and men shall begin to apostatize almost universally from the truth, gathering themselves together under the character of *Gog and Magog*, from the four corners or parts of the world, until they have reduced the church to a small compass. But when they have brought the saints to the last extremity, Christ himself will appear in his glory, and destroy his enemies with fire from heaven,

heaven, *Rev. xx. 9.* Which denotes the great conflagration, *2 Pet. iii. 10, &c.* Which is followed by the resurrection, and Christ's calling men before him into judgment. And perhaps *the time of this judgment* will take up the greatest part or the whole of *another millenary* of years; that as there were four thousand years from the creation to his first coming, there may be four from thence to his triumphant entry into heaven with all his saints. For though the scripture calls this time a day, yet we know what *Peter* says, that *a thousand years and a day are the same thing in Divine reckoning.* But that all men that ever lived should be publickly judged in a day, or year, or century, so as to have all their life and actions tried and searched into, is to me, I confess, inconceivable, not indeed in relation to God, but in relation to men and angels, who must be convinced of the equity of the procedure and sentence of the Judge.

But to return, I cannot forbear to take notice of one thing here; that the year 758 was the year 666 from the *persecution of Domitian*, when *John* was in *Patmos* and wrote this book, (as *Tertullian, Ireneus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerom*, and all the *ancients*, excepting *Epiphanius*,

Epiphanius, tell us) which though some say was A. C. 95, was most probably in or about the year 92, the persecution of *Domitian* having begun two years before. So that here we have another *characteristical mark of the number of the beast*. And now I hope I have said enough of the *future part of time*, as to the *general idea* which I think the *Revelation* gives of it. But I must proceed one step further with you, and consider under what revolution of time we are at present, that we may thence see what we are to expect, and how we are to act.

So that here I find myself insensibly taken off from any further direct prosecution of the question proposed by way of answer thereunto. And

Therefore II. I proceed to *improve* what I have said as to this question, both *theoretically* and *practically*.

And 1st. I shall advance something here as a *theoretical improvement* of what I have said upon the *former head*.

For by this *key* we may attain, in a great measure, to unlock the dark apocalyptical periods and times: those I mean that relate to the continuance of the *papal power*, both as to his gradual *growth* and *increase first*, and his
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decay afterwards, until his last and final destruction. And in relation to these the far greatest part of the apocalypse must be understood.

Now in order to this performance, I must premise this one thing, viz. That the *seven seals, trumpets, and vials*, (in which is contained the order and series of the whole apocalyptical prophecy, and to the explication and illustration of which all the other particular visions are subservient) that I say these are joined together by the *link* of the *seventh seal*, and *seventh trumpet*; so as the *seventh seal* doth, as it were, produce or include the *seven trumpets*, and the *seventh trumpet* the *seven vials* in the same manner.

This I should reckon no difficult thing to demonstrate, but that it would be too long to insist upon it in this place. And seeing Mr. *Durham* has done it in a great measure already, I pass it now the more easily. Only let me desire you to consider, that it was not until after the opening of the seventh seal that John *saw the angels with the seven trumpets*, chap. viii. 1, 2. And that it was *after the sounding of the seventh trumpet also*, that he tells us, *he saw ἄλλο σημεῖον μέγα καὶ θαυμαρὸν, another sign great and wonderful*, chap. xv. 1, which was
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the vision of the *vials*. So that I wonder Mr. Mede, Dr. More, and almost all others, have suffered themselves to be confounded in their interpretations, by reason of their not observing this, and consequently by jumbling some of the *trumpets* with the *seals*, and most of the *vials* with the *trumpets*.

Now this being supposed, we will find the series of time run in the following order, according to this *threefold septenary of periods*, which do insensibly run out one into the other—

The *first septenary of seals* relates to the Christian church during the state of the *Roman* empire, and these do accordingly run in this order—

The first seal exhibits the state of the church *under the conduct of a glorious rider on a white horse, having a bow in his hand, and a crown given unto him, who went out conquering and to conquer*, chap. vi. 2. Under which emblem *Christ* himself is represented going forth upon his conquests over *Jews and Gentiles*. And as this relates to *Christ's* first victory over his enemies, after his commission to his disciples to preach the gospel to all nations, Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, 20, and the pouring down of his spirit for this end, on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii.

so

So the full completion of it is not until the end of time. For after all other horsemen and enemies of the church have done their utmost against Christ and his people, we find this horseman leading them all in triumph as his captives, and proceeding in his conquests to make a full and final end of them. For which see chap. xix. v. 11, 12, &c. So that this seal begins with *An.* 33 or 34, and does not end until the end of time, as to its full completion. But if we reckon it only in relation to the beginning of the next seal, (Christ's conquest being darkened, as to the outward view of men, by what follows) we shall see that immediately.

The second seal, chap. vi. 3, 4, under the emblem of a *rider upon a red horse* (*who had a great sword given him in order to take peace from the earth, and to engage men in wars*) represents the state of the empire from the time that *Nero* made war on the *Jews*, *An.* 66, and so contains the civil wars of *Galba*, *Otho*, and *Vitellius*, when men did so remarkably kill one another, and the wars of *Vespasian* and *Titus* against the *Jews*, completed afterwards by the terrible destruction of that nation under *Hadrian*; together with his other wars, and the preceding persecutions of *Do-*

mitian and *Trajan*, and the conquests of this last prince. So that as this begins with An. 66, it ends with *Hadrian's* wars, An. 134, or with his life, An. 138.

The third seal, chap. vi. 5, 6, begins therefore with An. 138; where, under the hieroglyphick of *a rider on a black horse, with a pair of balances in his hand*, to weigh and measure all things exactly, is set forth the excellent reigns of the admirable *Antonines*, *Pius*, and *Philosophus*. And therefore this seal runs out in the year 180.

The fourth seal, chap. vi. 7, 8, represents the *Roman horse turned pale, and the rider changed from a grave and awful judge to a murderer, so as to be called Death*, by reason of his throwing so many into *hades*, or the *future state*, by *immature death*. Where we have a very remarkable account of the state of the *Roman* empire after the decease of the brave *Antoninus Philosophus*, under the barbarities of *Commodus*, the short-lived reigns of *Pertinax* and *Didius Julianus*, but especially under the severe and bloody *Septimius Severus*, in his wars against *Persecennius Nigerius*, *Albinus*, and others, and under his son *Caracalla*; and afterwards under *Macrinus*, *Heliogabulus*, (the reign of the excellent *Alexander Severus* being

being but a short breathing to the empire and the Christians) *Maximinus and his son Pupienus, Balbinus, and Gordianus, and Philippus and his son*: with whose death I think this seal runs out in the year 250, and with the death of these *Philippi*, who favoured Christianity, the four *evangelical living creatures* (which our translation renders *beasts* most unaccountably) cease to speak openly.

The fifth *seal* therefore discovers the state of the Christian church to be exceedingly languishing and melancholy, as if the saints were all slain, praying and crying for vengeance against their persecutors, while they are *represented as lying under the altar*, chap. vi. 9, 10, 11. So that this period begins with *Decius*, the *first universal persecutor* of Christians (for all the former persecutions under *Nero, Domitian, Trajan, and the Antonines*, were but *provincial ones*, and that of *Maximinus* against the *ministers only*), who began his reign and persecution together in the year 250, and was seconded in it by *Valerian* (for the short reigns of *Trebonianus Gallus* and *Æmilianus* hardly deserve to be taken notice of in this case). Now the souls of the martyrs are desired to rest patiently, until the confused reign of *Ga-*

lienus should run out, and the 30 tyrants that rose in his time should be cut off, together with the short-lived *Claudius Gothicus*; seeing after that little interval, their brethren were also to suffer still further under *Rome* pagan, viz. under *Aurelian*, and afterwards (when the short reigns of *Tacitus*, *Probus*, *Carus*, and *Carinus* should be over) under the cruel persecution raised against them by *Dioclesian* and *Maximinianus elder and younger*, together with *Severus* and *Maximinus*. So that this seal ends with the conclusion of this last persecution begun by *Dioclesian*, and so expires, A. C. 306.

The sixth seal, chap. vi. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, gives us an account of God's gracious answer at length to the prayer of the slain witnesses, in the destruction of *Rome Pagan*, after their cup was made full by the last cruel persecution. And this is described as if heaven and earth were come to an end. For so the prophets use to represent the ruin of kingdoms and monarchies, as we see, among other places, in *Jer.* iv. 24. *Isa.* xiii. 10, and xxiv. 21, 23, and *Joel* ii. 10. So that this seal contains the great and terrible wars of *Constantine the Great* against all those last tyrants, from the year
306,

306, to the death of the last pagan emperor *Licinius*, Ann. 324.

The seventh *seal* therefore, chap. viii. 1, represents *the short breathing of the church and peace of the Christians* under *Constantine*, from the year 313, when he *first published an edict* in their favour, and particularly from the death of *Licinius*, Ann. 324, to his own decease in the year 337, immediately upon which the scene alters. And then begins

The *second septenary of trumpets*, which gives us an account of the state of the church in relation to the gradual growth and increase of her Anti-Christian enemies, though in a way also of judgment upon them. Which I represent to you in the following series and order.

The first *trumpet*, chap. viii. 7, began a little after *Constantine's* death, in the wars between his *eldest* and *youngest sons*, or at the death of the *first* in battle, and of the *last* by the usurpation of *Magnentius*, which was a kind of *mixed storm of hail, fire, and blood*. The *continuance* of it was in the persecutions against the orthodox by *Constantius* and *Valens*, with the intervention of that against all Christians by *Julian the apostate*. And the *conclusion* of it seems to be the usurpation of

Maximus upon the death of *Gratianus*, and afterwards the death of *Valentinian the second*, and finally the wars and death of *Theodosius*. So that it began with the year 339, and ended *An.* 395.

The second trumpet, chap. viii. 8, 9, represents a *great kingdom, under the emblem of a mountain* (see Jer. li. 23.) *burning with fire*, (i. e. in a cruel and fierce manner) *and thrown into the midst of the body politic or empire of Rome, represented by the sea*; (see chap. xviii. 15.) *by which the third part of it became blood*. By which we are unquestionably to understand the irruption of the barbarous nations of the *Vandals and Goths* into the *Roman* dominions. This began about the death of *Theodosius*, and made a formidable progress *An.* 405, in the days of *Arcadius and Honorius*, by *Radagisus*, and afterwards *Alaricus*, who took *Rome*, *Ann.* 410. And it was continued during the inroads of *Athaulphus the Goth* (who pillaged the great city, *Ann.* 414), and of *Genfericus the Vandal*, and of *Attila the Hun*, into *Italy* and other *Roman* provinces, which they and others about that time wasted miserably to the year 455, and afterwards to the year 476.

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The third *trumpet*, chap. viii. 10, 11, doth plainly represent the *destruction of the western empire*, by a *star falling from the heaven of its glory as a burning lamp*. For after it had struggled with its fatal destiny, under the obscure *Cæsars, Avitus, Majoranus, Severus, &c.* it did at length expire with *Augustulus, An. 475, or 476.* This *star* was called *Wormwood*, because of the bitter troubles this brought upon the empire. For the *Ostro-Goths* planted themselves in *Italy*, and reigned as arbitrarily as the *emperors* had ever done. So that this period began with the kingdom of the *Ostro-Goths, An. 476*, and ended with it, *An. 553.*

The fourth *trumpet*, chap. viii. 12, brings yet further desolations on *Rome*, by *darkening its splendor and glory*, represented by the *eclipsing of the sun for a third part of it, and the moon and stars also in like manner.* By which we are to understand, no doubt, the decay of the *imperial power and authority in the west*, by the *Lombards* and *Exarchat* afterwards. So that this trumpet lasted from the year 568, to the year 758, when *Pepin* made the *Pope* in a manner *king of Rome* (who in requital of his kindness, gave his son *Charlemagne* the empty title of emperor of *Rome*, making thus

the succeeding western empire *an image* of the ancient one, Rev. xiii. 14, 15), by which both the power of the *Lombards*, of the *Exarchat*, and the *emperors*, did as it were terminate in him. And as the *Exarchat* ended, *An. 752*, so the *Lombards* were totally expelled *Italy* a little after, *viz.* in the year 773.

Now follows a *threefold woe*, which makes up the *subject* of the *three following trumpets*, which are therefore called the *Woe Trumpets*, because of the remarkableness of these judgments above the former. Therefore

The fifth *trumpet*, chap. ix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, brings forth the *first woe*. The description of which is long, and the figures many; so that I cannot be supposed to say much on so large a head here. Let a short account satisfy you. In the first place, therefore, we are to understand that no other than the *bishop* of Rome can be meant by *the star that fell from heaven*. For this is the symbol of the gospel-ministry, *chap. i. 20*, and agrees not therefore with *Mahomet*. Neither can the place this star fell from, *viz.* heaven, which denotes the glorious and holy state of the church, agree to any other, than one that *constituteth* from the service of Christ to the service

service of the world and Satan. So that as ancient *Babylon* is said to fall from the *heaven* of temporal glory, as *Lucifer* or the morning star of the nations: so is the bishop of Rome said to fall from the *spiritual heaven* of his primitive glory and purity; being degenerated from the first angel of light in the church, to be the grand angel of darkness; and becoming thus the prince of incarnate devils, the key of the bottomless pit (which he and his followers boast of as the keys of St. Peter) being put into his hand by the old serpent for carrying on the black designs of hell. 2. The dark pitchy smoak that came out of the pit, upon his opening it, was certainly designed to signify the ignorance which then prevailed in the world, and the gross and horrid errors that were spread abroad and vended for Divine truths by the sottish monks, which then swarmed abroad under various names and leaders, and particularly the idolatry which then began to prevail universally in the world. For about that time, though several of the Greek emperors did stiffly oppose image-worship, yet the popes did at length prevail, though multitudes on both sides lost their lives in this quarrel. 3. The locusts that came out of this smoak

fmoak were the *Saracens*, that followed *Mahomet*, who compiled the model of his religion, by the help of *Jews* and *Christian heretics*, especially of *Sergius*, a *Nestorian monk*, whom * the *Arabian* and *Turkish* writers call *Bahira*. These *Arabian locusts* (whose *hegyra* or *æra* is dated from *Mahomet's flight from Mecca*, Ann. Dom. 622, a little after the pope got the title of *universal bishop*, Ann. Dom. 606) did in a little time so increase, that they conquered or over-run a great many countries in a very little time. For they overflowed *Persia*, *Syria*, *Egypt*, *Palestine*, and other places, about the year 729. They extended their arms into *India*, An. 643, and into *Spain*, An. 711, and ravaged several parts of *France* from An. D. 721, to the year 726, till they were routed at length with a great slaughter by *Charles Martel*, about the year 728. However they continued after that to be a scourge to the *Christians*, especially under the reign of the Great *Almanzor*, until about the year 772, when † the *Turks* began

* See Dr. *Prideaux's Life of Mahomet*, page 45, 46, 47, 48.

† See the Authors of the *Turkish History*, put out by *Conradus Clauferus*.

to grow famous. So that the *five months*, or *150 years*, wherein they tormented the Christians (though they had no power to destroy their empire), was from 622 to 772. But we must not imagine that these five months of years are the period of this trumpet. For this must be reckoned from 758 to *Ann. Dom.* 1067, or thereabouts, when *Tangrolipex*, the *Turk*, put an end to the *Saracen empire* by conquering the *Caliph of Persia*. Now therefore, in the fourth place (to pass by the other things observable in this *Saracen* woe-trumpet), let it be considered, that as the *apostate bishop* of Rome is called the *angel or messenger of the bottomless pit*; so *Mahomet*, the king and prophet of these *Saracen locusts*, is called *Abaddon* or *Apollyon*, v. 11, i. e. a destroyer, as carrying on his religion by sword and violence; from whence his *locust followers* are said, v. 10, to have *stings like scorpions*, by which they poisoned the souls of men if they did at all spare their bodies: for they were in other respects *swift and strong as horses*, and had *faces like men* in their reasoning as well as fighting for their superstition, adorned *with hair like women*; appearing soft, and insinuating at first view, though armed with *lions' teeth*, as being fierce and

cruel.

cruel. By reason of which qualifications they got many victories, and are therefore represented as *crowned with crowns of gold*, v. 7, 8, 9. But upon the whole matter this *trumpet*, as it supposes the rise of the *Saracen* empire, from the *æra of the Hegyra* 622; and the begun rise of the pope from the year 606 or 608. So after five months or 150 years, i. e. to the year 772, the *Saracen* preparations continued, and the papal from 606 or 608 to 756 or 758. So that the duration of this begins with *Ann. Dom.* 758, and expires, in relation to that part of it which concerns the *Saracens*, about the year 1060. But in as far as it relates to the *popish* Anti-Christian party, it is continued down through the next trumpet and the last both. But seeing the *Saracens* are brought in here as a scourge to the worshippers of the beast, the *Turks* succeeding them in this work, therefore the trumpet is denominated from this visible scene of affairs, and we must accordingly suppose that it ends with them.

The sixth *trumpet* therefore, which is called the *Second Woe*, brings in the *Turks* upon the stage of the *Roman* empire; who are represented as *four angels or messengers of judgment*,

chap. xiii. 13, 14, 15, &c. which were *bound on the other side of the river Euphrates for a time*; but are now let loose to pass that river and make their inroads into the *Roman* empire, and to erect themselves into a monarchy upon the ruins of it. Now they are called *Four Angels*, because they were then divided into *four sultanies* or principalities, as their ambassadors told the emperor *Justin*, in the year 570, as is related by one of the *Byzantine* historians, and taken notice of by all * writers on this head. For at their remarkable passing the River *Euphrates*, they were under the command of *Solyman Shabum* and his three sons; and when he was drowned in the passage, they brought themselves under four other captains, viz. *Otrogules* and his three sons; of whom one was the famous *Ottoman*, who a little after laid the foundations of that great empire, over which his family keeps the sceptre to this day. They are described as *horsemen*, for so they generally were, fighting on horseback for the most part, of which the *horse's tail* is still a monument, being used as their chief ensign of honour and command.

* See Pocock's *Supplem. ad Abul-phar*, page 106—108, and *Leunclav. Hist.* page 86.

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Their number was prodigious, and might be at that time perhaps exactly *two hundred thousand thousand*, as it seems to be here asserted; for they seldom sent out an army of fewer than a thousand thousand fighting men at once. *Their polished breast-plates represented fire*, when shone upon by the sun: *and their horses are said to be like lions* for fierceness. And seeing fire-arms began then to be used in war (of which they had great store, together with cannon of prodigious bigness, which did facilitate their taking cities, and particularly *Constantinople*) their shooting these on horseback is represented as if *the fire, and smoke, and brimstone, had come out of their horses' mouths*, their pieces being discharged over their heads. With these they killed the bodies of men, and with their *tails which had heads also*, they killed the souls of those poor creatures that were stung or bit with their poisonous doctrines; infomuch that *the third part of men*, i. e. the third part of the ancient *Roman empire* (viz. that part which fell to *Constantius*, when *Constantine* divided the whole among his *three sons*) was destroyed and conquered by them. Now if we enquire into the time of this trumpet, we have an exact calculation
given

given of it. For they are said to be *prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year*: an *hour* being ever used *indefinitely* in this book for a *season or period of time*, we are accordingly to take it here. But *days, years, and months*, being used *definitely* always, we must likewise interpret them so here also. So that the sense of the place is, that *the Turks were loosed from Euphrates as being prepared instruments in the hand of God, for the ruin of the Grecian empire, for a certain hour or season: even for a day, and a month, and a year.* For in that period of time they destroyed the eastern empire. For a prophetic year being 360, and a month 30; these with the addition of one more make up the period of 391 years. Now we took notice before, that in or about the year 1067, i. e. 1062, of prophetic reckoning, *Tangrolipix* erected *the Turkish empire* upon the ruins of that of the *Saracens*. From thence therefore, if we compute the 391 years, we are led down to the year 1458, according to our ordinary computation; but, according to prophetic reckoning, to the remarkable year 1453, when *Mahomet the Great* took *Constantinople*, and so erected his own empire upon the ruins of
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the *Grecian*. For as it is very remarkable that *John* does not make the period of 391 years to be the whole duration of the *Turkish* empire, but only its preparation for after-action from its *first rise* to its *highest exaltation*; so we see how exactly this is fulfilled in the event; which therefore I hope is no unedifying speculation.

Now seeing there is a remarkable stop, and void as it were, between the end of the *sixth trumpet* and the beginning of the *seventh*, which is filled up with the account of the *slaying of the witnesses*, in chap. xi. I do humbly conceive, that whatever particular slaughters of the saints were before, or may be afterwards, the great slaughter must have been during that interval of time. For this could not be during the *height* of the *two former woes* upon *Anti-Christ* and his followers. And much less can it be supposed to be after the sound of the *seventh trumpet*, and while God's last plagues upon the beast are pouring out. I do therefore reckon, that the *witnesses who prophesied in sackcloth* from the beginning of papal superstitions, were the honest *Piedmontois, Albigenes, and Waldenses*; who were slain at length, after they had stood the shock
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of all former attacks, particularly that of *Simon Monfort*, with his 500,000 *Croissades*, whom *Innocent III.* diverted from the *Saracen* war, in order to extirpate that good people, about the year 1200. Now the slaying of these witnesses began in the year 1416, when *John Huss*, and afterward *Jerom* of *Prague* were burnt, but came not to its height until the *Bohemian Calixtines* complied with the *Council of Basil*, An. 1434, after which the faithful *Taborites* were totally ruined, as well as their brethren in *Piedmont*, *France*, &c. which happened about the year 1492. For they being destroyed, the *Calixtines* were no better *than the dead carcases* (as they are called, ver. 8.) or *corps* of the former *living witnesses*, over which the popish party did triumph; for they looked upon them as *standing* trophies of their *victory*, and therefore did not think fit to *kill* them *further*, or *bury* them out of their sight. For it is said, ver. 7, 8, *that after they had finished their testimony, the beast did make war upon them, καὶ ἀποκτενέει αὐτοὺς καὶ τὰ πτώματα αὐτῶν.* He killed them and their *corps* also (for the additional words in our version, *shall lie*, are not in the original, and do but mar the sense), or *their bodies* (for

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some readings have it *συνάλα*), in the street of the great city, i. e. in Bohemia, one street of the papal dominions, or the great city Rome, in a large sense. For I find that towards the end of the *fifteenth century* the witnesses were in a manner wholly extinct. For * *Comenius* tells us, that about the year 1467, the *Waldenses* in *Austria* and *Moravia* had complied so far, as to dissemble their religion, and turn to popery in profession and outward compliance. † The *Taborites* in the mean time, upon their refusing to do so, were so destroyed, that it was much that *seventy* of them could get together, to consult about continuing their church, and about finding out some qualified person to be their minister, for they had none left, *An. 1467*. And so low was the church of Christ then, that when the hidden remains of the *Taborites* (who were called *Speculani* from their lurking in dens and caves) sent out *four men* (as the same author relates in another ‡ book) to travel *one* through

* *Hist. Pers. Eccl. Bohem. ch. 20. sect. 4, 5. page 70, 71.*

† *Ibid. ch. 20. sect. 3.*

‡ *Comenius* in his *short History of the Bohemian Church*, prefixed to his *Exhortation to the Church of England*, sect. 66. page 40.

Greece and the east, another to Russia and the north, a third to Thrace, Bulgaria, and the neighbouring places, and a fourth to Asia, Palestine, and Egypt.* They did all indeed safely return to their brethren, but with this sorrowful news, that they found no church of Christ that was pure, or free from the grossest errors, superstition, and idolatry. This was in the year 1497. And when they sent two of their number two years afterwards, viz. Luke Prague and Thomas German, to go into Italy, France, and other places, to see if there were any of the old Waldenses left alive; they returned with the same melancholy news as the former had done, that they could neither find nor hear of any remaining; only they were informed of the martyrdom of Savanarolla (who suffered in the year 1498), and they were told of some few remains of the Piedmontois, that were scattered and hid among the Alps, but nobody knew where. Now a few years after this even the few remains of the Taborites were found out and persecuted, hardly any escaping; so that A. C. 1510, six suffered together publicly, and the year following, that famous martyr Andreas Paliwka, who I think was the last of that period. From

whose death, in the end of the year 1511, or beginning of 1512, to the dawning of the reformation by the first preaching of *Carolastadius and Zuinglius*, (who appeared at least a year before *Luther*, as * Hottinger and others tell us) there was only about *three years and a half*, which answers as near as can be to the three days and a half of the unburied state of the witnesses. So that *the Spirit's entering into the witnesses*, v. 11, began with the year 1516, if not the year before, though this appeared most remarkably when *Luther* opposed the pope publickly, *An. 1517*. They were not only enlivened, but (to explain the words of *John*, v. 11, a little further) *they rose up upon their feet*, *An. 1529*, when so many princes and free cities in *Germany* protested against the *edict of Worms and Spire*, and so got the name of Protestants. They heard a voice from heaven, saying, v. 12, *Ascend hither*, i. e. to power and peace; when *Maurice of Saxony* beat the emperor *Charles*, *An. 1552*. And accordingly they did after that ascend to the heaven of honour, rest, and security, as if they had been wafted up by a cloud, and that in the sight even of their ene-

* *Hist. Reform.* vol. 1.

mies; when the protestant religion was established and legally settled and allowed of, in the year 1555, which was continued and confirmed by *Maximilian* and *Rulolph* afterwards. In whose days the church began to be settled in several other countries, viz. in *England*, *Scotland*, *Denmark*, *Swedeland*, *Switzerland*, and the *Low Countries*. Now it is observable that in this period of time, when the witnesses finished their testimony, or were about to do so, the *Turks* took *Constantinople*, An, 1553, which I take to be designed by *the earthquake that destroyed the tenth part of the Roman dominions*, v. 13, for the *Grecian empire* was reduced before that, from being the *third part* of that empire, to be the *tenth part* only. So that *Mahomet's* prevailing over the *Greek church*, and the *pope's conquests* over the *western Christians* was much about a time, and therefore said to be in the *same hour or period of time*, i. e. before the *sixth trumpet* ended, and before the *seventh* began: for the *sixth trumpet is the hour of the Turkish woe*. And indeed their triumph was much of the same kind also. For as the *papists* triumphed only over the *dead bodies of the witnesses*, i. e. over the *Calixtines* (who were no longer living witnesses,

nesses, the *Taborites* being all gone, and having overcome their enemies by their blood and the word of their testimony), so the *Turkish* triumph was only over seven thousand names of men, i. e. over the remaining eastern Christians, who were so degenerated in all respects, that they were only names or shadows of true Christians. Only whereas the *Grecians* did yet own themselves to be the same in profession with their ancestors, and so were the same with them as to name, the *Calixtines* were even debarred that privilege.

These things being therefore considered, (which I could easily enlarge upon were I not confined at this time), I think it is abundantly plain, that the great slaughter of the witnesses must have been precisely at the time I have mentioned. For it could not be till *Anti-Christ* was at his highest pitch of power and grandeur, which was not before this time. And it was not possible that it should be after the seventh trumpet sounded and the vials began to be poured out; seeing the witnesses were not only risen then, but were the instruments of this last and greatest woe to the worshippers of the beast. And therefore we find, chap. xi. v. 14, 15, &c. that as soon as
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the witnesses arose, the second woe ended, and the third commenced, in the begun exaltation of the saints and servants of God. And it is to me altogether inconceivable, that the witnesses should be risen, and the Anti-Christian interest decline; and yet that the witnesses should be entirely cut off during such a period. So that I am almost bold, on this head (though I am resolved to propose my apocalyptic thoughts only by way of probable conjecture) to affirm that it is impossible, morally speaking, that the witnesses can ever be so entirely slain as they have been before, whatever particular and provincial persecutions they may be under for a time, and whatever formidable appearances there may be against the protestant interest every where. Against this assertion I can foresee no objection of moment, excepting one; and this is, that seeing the witnesses are said to prophesy all the 1260 days of the beast's reign in sackcloth, and to be slain only when they have finished their testimony, v. 3, 7, it seems therefore very strange to say that they shall be slain during the time of their 1260 days or years prophecy, and so long before the end of them. To which I answer, that in the third verse there are two things spoken of, with respect to the opposers of

Anti-Christ. The *first* is, that they are called *witnesses or martyrs*, against the abominations of that enemy. And the *second* is, that they are said to *preach or prophesy* against that interest. Now it is only in the second sense that they are spoken of in relation to the whole 1260 days. So that, though the *προφῆτεια*, or *witness-bearing* of the saints continue, in a large and general sense, for 1260 years, (and that for the most part in sackcloth, because of the constant troubles they meet with from that restless enemy) yet their *μαρτυρία*, or *witness-bearing by martyrdom and sufferings*, in a strict and proper sense, relates only to the time of their low and obscure state during the rage of the papists, before the founding of the seventh trumpet. Now it is not said (though perhaps this was never taken notice of before), that the witnesses were killed after their whole prophecy or preaching were over, or after the 1260 days were run out; but only *that after their μαρτυρία, or testimony for Christ by suffering was over*, that then, I say, *they were universally slain and cut off*, v. 7. Now, though there have been many persecutions since the reformation, and the founding of the seventh trumpet, yet they were

were never universal ones. Besides, that the difference is great between the witnesses before and since that time in this respect: for since *Luther's* appearing, our religion has been established publicly in several nations, and authorised by law, in opposition to popery, which it never was before. But to proceed,

The *seventh trumpet* sounds, *chap. xi. 14, &c.*, immediately upon the end of the *sixth*, i. e. upon the rising of the witnesses. Now as the 13th and 14th *chapters* are but further representations of the state of affairs under the *six trumpets preceding*, relating to the condition both of the church, and Anti-Christian party; so the 15th and 16th *chapters* are *preliminary* to the *period of the seven vials* being poured out upon the papacy and its dominions. Of which visions I have a great many things to say; but I must curb myself now, lest I prove too tedious. I shall therefore only put you in mind of what I hinted before, that the *seventh trumpet* comprehends the seven vials. For these are but the parts of it, which gradually destroy the papal interest, which had increased under the former *trumpets*. As therefore this period brings in reformation, and by *various steps* makes the *kingdoms of the world* (which before

fore were under Anti-Christ), to change so far and so wonderfully as *to become the kingdoms of God and Christ*, chap. xi. 14, &c. so after a general but glorious account of the state of the church from the reformation, chap. xiv. and a general account of the *vials* to be poured out upon the *popish* party during the same period, chap. xv. we have a distinct account of the pouring out of these *seven vials*, chap. xvi. in obedience to the great *voice out of the temple*, v. 1, which is but a repetition of the founding of the *seventh trumpet*, chap. xi. 14, under a new representation of it.

The *third and last septenary*, therefore, is that of the *vials*, or last plagues and judgments upon *Rome* papal; which, as far as I can, I shall explain, by a distinct account of such of them as I reckon to be fulfilled, and by some few conjectures upon the remaining ones.

But before I proceed to the particular consideration of these, there are two things, which I would premise. The first is, that as the *trumpets* did raise *Anti-Christ* up, and the *vials* must pull him down; so there is a wonderful relation that the *last* bear to the *former*, especially the *four first* ones. For the *first trumpet* and *first vial* bring judgments on the *earth*,
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the *second trumpet and vial on the sea*, the *third trumpet and vial on the rivers*, and the *fourth trumpet and vial on the sun*. The second is this; that seeing the *vials do suppose a struggle and war between the popish and reformed parties*, every *vial* is to be looked upon, as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that *first party* upon this *other*; the *issue* of which proves at length favourable to the *latter* against the *former*. Which, seeing it is the most *noble and remarkable part* of the *period* that the *vial* relates to, is therefore *that which denominates* the period itself; even as the *conquest of Pompey by Cæsar*, and of *Anthony by Augustus*, suppose their *wars before*, and give the *denomination* to their *governments*. These things being premised, I now proceed.

The first *vial*, which *fell upon the earth*, to the *tormenting of the subjects of the beast*, chap. xvi. 2, doth denote God's judgments upon the *foundation of the papal power*; the earth being that on which we walk and build our houses, and out of whose womb we are maintained. So that by this I understand the *popish clergy* and the *papal dominions and revenues*, as they are upheld by them. This therefore

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began

began with *the reformation*, and continued until the time that the *popish* factors and trumpery were thrown out of as many countries of *Europe* as embraced the reformation. And we may easily conceive what a mortification this was to that party, when the pretended sanctity of their *priests*, *monks*, and *nuns*, was found to be mere *cheat*, and their miracles nothing else but *lies* or *legerdemain*; and when their tales of *purgatory* were exposed to public contempt, and their *pardons* and *indulgences* would *sell no longer*; and consequently when the pope, and his *red-batted and mitred officers* saw themselves driven out of so great a part of their dominions, their *seminaries* for breeding their *motley soldiers* of *all denominations and orders* pulled down, and so much of their *yearly revenues* lost. Whence they are said to fall under a noisome and grievous *ἔλκος*, *ulcer* or *sore*; being this way pained and vexed inwardly, and rendered contemptible to the whole world, that looked upon them as no better than *vermin*, and the *plagues* of *man-kind*. So that this *vial* began with the rise of *Zuinglius* and *Luther*, and the *other reformers*, in the year 1516, and 1517, and continued to the year 1566, i. e. about forty years; for
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against that time all the *reformed churches* were settled, and had published their *creeds and confessions* against *Rome*, in opposition to the *determinations* of the *popish council of Trent*, published *An. 1563*, and the *creed* of pope *Pius the fourth*, which added twelve Anti-Christian articles to the twelve primitive Christian ones, which was put out, A. C. 1564.

The second *vial*, ver. 3, must therefore begin where the other ended, as to the period of time that commences from thence. Now I find that in the year 1566, the *wars* between the *king of Spain* and the *States of the Netherlands* began, when the latter got the nickname of *Gueuse*. And though the *Spaniards* were often victorious at first, yet they were at length forced to declare them *free states*. It was then that *the sea became blood* to the *Romanists*, their *votaries* being miserably defeated in their expectations. For after their cruelties under the *Duke of Alva* in the *Low Countries*, and their massacres of the protestants in *France* and other places, the *scene* was changed very quickly. So that A. C. 1588, the *Spaniards* lost their vast *Armada*, and did ever after decline in their power. And the *Duke of Guise*, the inveterate enemy of
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the protestants, was killed the same year. And A. C. 1598, died *Philip the 2d of Spain*, being eaten up of lice: the *edict of Nantz* being given out the same year in *France* in favour of the protestants. So that as the *reformed interest* was in peace every where, and conquered in *Holland* and *England*; the *popish party* on the other hand saw *Spain*, the late terror of the protestants, brought to a languishing condition, and all their *allies* weary of wars and persecutions. And as in the year 1609, the *truce* was made between the *Spaniards* and the *Dutch*; so the war, though renewed and carried on afterwards, became languid and faint, so as hardly to be felt or minded by either party, especially the *Dutch*, who were for the most part victorious and successful. So that, as the period of this *vial* began An. 1566, so we may reckon it continued about fifty years, viz. to the year 1617; seeing we shall find that the third vial did begin then. For

The third *vial*, v. 4, 5, 6, 7, was poured out upon the *rivers and fountains of water*, or those *territories of the papacy* which were as necessary to it as *rivers and fountains are to a country*, being as it were the former vial continued,

tinued, as to the kind of the plague. For as the former destroyed *the living creatures or living souls* that were in or upon the sea, viz. *the Spaniards*, the great *mariners* of the world at that time, as to their marine power; who after the year 1588, lost their former *sovereignty of the seas* to the *English* and *Dutch*: so this latter plague makes it difficult for the *popish* party to subsist and keep their ground even in the *inland country* and several dominions of *Germany*, and the neighbouring places. For in the year 1617, *Ferdinand* being forced upon the *Bohemians* by the emperor *Matthias* and crowned king, the foundation of new quarrels was laid this way. For a little while after another most bloody religious war ensued, which shook all the empire, and frightened *Europe*. And though the protestants lost *Bohemia*, the *Palatinate* in part, and were driven out of *Moravia*, *Austria*, and *Silesia*, at this time, and were not only persecuted in many places, but like to be extirpated and rooted out universally; yet the tide turned all on a sudden. For after the emperor had ruled *Germany* with a veteran army, for a considerable time, *Gustavus Adolphus* enters *Germany* in the year 1630, and conquers every where. And
though

though he was killed about two years after, yet his army continued victorious, until at length all things were accommodated at the *peace of Munster*, A. C. 1648, with which therefore the period of the *third vial* must be supposed to end, which consists of 31 years. Now as this began with persecutions against, and cruelties upon the protestants; so at length *the angel of the waters is heard to give thanks for making the papists drink of their own blood at last*. Which song of praise *another angel falls in with, and says amen to*. All which seems to denote the joy both of the *protestant state and church* upon the *success* of the *Swedish arms* against the *emperor*.

The fourth *vial* comes now to be considered. And as this is poured out *upon the sun of the papal kingdom*, v. 8, so the effect of it is *mens being scorched or burned with fire, which yet does not make them turn to God, but blaspheme his name the more*, as we may see, v. 9. Now as this vial must begin where the other ends, *viz.* at, or a little after the year 1648, so I cannot see but it must denote the wars that followed the *peace of Munster*, with other *incidental occurrences*. Now we find that the *French hostilities* and wars in *Flanders* began
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about this time. And though this fire seemed to be quenched by the *Pyrenean peace*, about 10 years after that of *Munster*, yet this proved rather fuel to the flame, which broke out with more violence than before, by the seizure of *Lorain*, the new conquests of the French in *Burgundy* and *Flanders*, and the wars upon *Germany*, and invasion on the *Low Countries*; to which we may add the French king's quarrels with several popes about the restitution of *Castro*, the rights of the duke of *Modena*, the affairs of *Corfi*, and about the *regale* and the *franchises*. Now seeing the bombarding of towns and cities was chiefly made use of in these later wars, we may see how properly the scorching or burning men from above (as if the sun had sent down fire and heat from his own body) is made use of to characterize the time of this vial. But the chief thing to be taken notice of here, is, that the sun and other luminaries of heaven are the emblem of princes and kingdoms, as we took notice before. Therefore the pouring out of this vial on the sun must denote the humiliation of some eminent potentates of the *Romish* interest, whose influences and countenance cherish and support the *papal cause*. And these therefore

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must

must be principally understood of the *Houses* of *Austria* and *Bourbon*, though not exclusively of other popish princes. Now it is not unusual with God to make his enemies crush and weaken one another. And thus I suppose this vial is to be understood, when it is said, that upon the pouring of it out *on the sun*, power was given to him, i. e. *the sun* (as most understand the words from the connexion), *to scorch men with fire*. And this is plain in what of the vial is fulfilled, and will be perhaps more so afterwards. As therefore *France* was made use of, in the instances given, to vex and scorch the *Austrian family*, in both branches of it, so afterwards was he himself tormented when he saw himself forced to leave *Holland*, which he was so near surprizing, *An. 1672*, and especially when he was forced to resign all his conquests in *Flanders* by the late peace of *Reyswick*. It is true, he seems now to have got more glory than ever by the accession of his *grandson* to the *Spanish* monarchy; but then this is by an eclipse upon the *Austrian family*, which is expired in the first branch of it. And who knows but this advancement may lay the foundation of the ruin or decay of the *French power*, by exhausting that kingdom,

dom, both as to men and money, in defence of a *weak monarchy*? In the mean time, we see this vial has already taken place in darkening the glory of king *James* (whom the papists expected new conquests from) by the hand of king *William*; by whom also God put a stop to the career of the *French* monarch in his conquests in *Flanders*, and on the *Rhine*. And we see it further poured out in the eclipse of the *Austrian* family, by the loss of *Spain* and its dependent principalities, as also in defeating the wicked designs of the three confederate monarchs of *Poland*, *Denmark*, and *Russia*.

And now, seeing I have marked out the time we are in at present, it is time also to put a stop to our *apocalyptical* thoughts; seeing no man can pretend, upon any just grounds, to calculate *future times*. However, seeing I have come so far, I shall adventure to present you further with some *conjectural thoughts* on this head; for I am far from the presumption of some men, to give them any higher character.

Now my conjectures shall relate to *two things*, viz. to the *remaining part of this vial*, and to the *other vials that follow this*.

And, first, as to *the remaining part of this vial*, I do humbly suppose that it will come to its highest pitch about *An. 1717*, and that it will run out about the year 1794. The reasons for the first conjecture are two. The first is, because I find that the *papal kingdom* got a considerable accession to its power upon the *Roman western empire's* being destroyed *An. 475*, to which the *Heruli* succeeded the year following, and the *Ostro-Goths* afterwards. Now if from this remarkable year we begin the calculation of the 1260 years, they lead us down to A. C. 1735, which in prophetic account is this very year 1717. The second is, because (as I have many years ago observed) this year leads us down to a new *centenary revolution*. For is it not observable that *John Huss* and *Jerom of Prague* (to run this up no further) were burned *An. 1417*? After which the true religion in *Bohemia*, and other places, was more and more obscured and suppressed, until that famous year 1517, when *Luther* arose, and gave the reformation a new resurrection; according to that remarkable prediction of *Jerom of Prague*, *Centum annis revolutis Deo respondebitis et mihi*; which the *Bohemians* afterwards stamped upon their coin as
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their *motto*. From which year the reformed interest did still increase (whatever particular stops and troubles it met with) till the year 1617; about which time the *German* and *Bohemian* wars began to break out. And it is but too obvious, what an ebb hath followed from that time to this, notwithstanding the pouring out of the second, third, and fourth *vials*. So that there is ground to hope, that about the beginning of another such century, things may again alter for the better; for I cannot but hope that some new mortification of the *chief supporters* of *Anti-Christ* will then happen; and perhaps the *French monarchy* may begin to be considerably humbled about that time: that whereas the present *French king* takes the *sun* for his *emblem*, and this for his *motto*, *Nec pluribus impar*, he may at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself (at least before the year 1794), be forced to acknowledge that (in respect to neighbouring potentates) he is even *singulis impar*.

But as to the *expiration* of this vial, I do fear it will not be until the year 1794. The reason of which conjecture is this, that I find the pope got a new foundation of exaltation, when *Justinian*, upon his conquest of *Italy*,

left it in a great measure to the *pope's management*, being willing to eclipse his own authority, to advance that of this haughty *prelate*. Now this being in the year 552, this, by the addition of the 1260 years, reaches down to the year 1811; which, according to prophetic account, is the year 1794. And then I do suppose the *fourth vial* will end, and the *fifth* commence, by a new mortification of the papacy, after this vial has lasted 148 years; which indeed is long, in comparison with the former vials; but if it be considered in relation to the *fourth, fifth, and sixth trumpets*, it is but short, seeing the *fourth* lasted 190 years, the *fifth* 302, and the *sixth* 393.

And now, my friends, I may be well excused, if I venture no further, in giving you any more *conjectural thoughts* upon this *present period* of time. But seeing I pretend to give my *speculations* of what is *future*, no higher character than *guesses*, I shall still venture to add something to what I have already said. Therefore be pleased first to call to mind, what I premised to the consideration of the *seven vials*, as the *second preliminary*, viz.
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that seeing the vials do (all of them) suppose a struggle or war between the popish and reformed parties, every vial is to be looked upon as the event and conclusion of some new periodical attack of that first party upon this other; the issue of which proves at length favourable to the latter against the former. For if this be duly considered, it will let us see, that great declining of the protestant interest for some time, and great and formidable advances and new degrees of increase in the Romish party, are very consistent with the state of both these opposite interests under the vials. For, as Rome pagan was gradually ruined under the seals, under many of which it seemed to increase to outward observation, and to become more rampant than before, when yet it was indeed declining, so must we suppose it will be with Rome papal. For monarchies, as they rise gradually and insensibly, so do they wear out so likewise. And therefore we must not entertain such chimerical notions of the fall of the papacy, as if it were to be accomplished speedily or miraculously, as many have done. For as it rose insensibly and step by step, so it must fall in like manner. But to illustrate this further, as to what of the vials is yet unfulfilled,

by what is past, let us look back on the *two preceding vials*. The *second vial* therefore began with a formidable attack upon the protestants by the growth of the *Austrian* family, from the year 1566, to the year 1588; during all which time the vial seemed rather to be poured out upon the protestants than papists. But as there must be a *war*, to denote a victory, so it was in this case. So that the vial was seen at last in its effects upon the *Austrian* party, from An. 1588, to 1598, and afterwards to 1617. For it is with the *church*, as it is with particular Christians, who are often forely buffeted by Satan, and sometimes brought even to extremities by temptations; but do ever carry the victory at last. Who would have believed that the Christian church was about to triumph over the *Roman pagan empire*, when the dreadful *persecution* under *Dioclesian* and his *collegiate emperors* was at its highest pitch? But the darkest time of the night ushers in the dawning of the church's day, in the usual way of God's providence over the same. And this is very conspicuously to be observed in the period of the *third vial*. Who would have thought that the loss of *Bohemia*, and the emperor *Ferdinand's* ruling all

all *Germany* with a formidable army, were like to issue in the victories of the *Swedish arms*, and the future security of the protestant interest through the empire and elsewhere? So that we must not wonder, if for 16 years the *House of Bourbon* be raised up to be a further terror and scourge to the world, and to protestant nations particularly. And, as a confirmation of this conjecture, let it be considered, in the second place (besides what I have hinted before on this head), that it is something very extraordinary, and peculiar in some sense to this vial, *that the sun, upon which it is poured out, should yet be made the executor of the judgment of it on others, at the same time that he is tormented with it himself.* So that whosoever is denoted by the *sun* here (as I suppose the *House of Bourbon* principally is), is made use of, as the devil is, both to torment others, and to be tormented himself in so doing. And if the king of *France* therefore be denoted by this principally, I fear he is yet to be made use of, in the hand of God, as *Nebuchadnezzar* was of old against the *Jews*, viz. as a further severe scourge to the protestant churches every where. And, besides this characteristical mark, which seems to forebode

bode his further exaltation and our humiliation; there is yet a third thing, that I cannot but think upon with dread and trembling of heart, *viz.* that it is further said, *that while this sun of the popish world is running his fatal and dreadful career, and scorching men with fire, they are so far from being bettered by these judgments, that they go on more and more to blaspheme the name of God, who has power over these plagues.* And while this continues to be the state of the protestant world, and while atheism, deism, Socinianism, irreligion, profaneness, scepticism, formality, hatred of godliness, and a bitter persecuting spirit continue and increase among us, what can we expect but new and desolating judgments? For while we continue *to walk thus contrary to God*, we cannot but expect that *he should walk contrary to us also.* It is in vain for us to boast of our *privileges*, or plead exemption from *judgments* on this account. For where there is no national reformation and repentance, national sins are like to pull down miseries upon us, so much the sooner and more certainly, that we have been so singularly and peculiarly privileged. For we may in this case expect that God will say to us, as to the *Israelites*

Israelites of old, You have I specially known and chosen above all the families or nations of the earth, therefore will I punish you more certainly and more severely than any other kingdom or nation. And therefore if we go on in sin, as we have hitherto done, let us take heed to ourselves, lest vengeance be near. I pray God I may be mistaken in my fears. But I am afraid I have but too just reason to turn prophet here, by applying to ourselves what *Peter* said to those of his time: *The time is come, that judgment must begin at the house of God.* Though I do also conclude with him, that if it begin at us, dreadful will be the end of our enemies at last. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear? Wherefore if we be called to suffer for our holy religion, let us do so according to the will of God, committing the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator. And I wish my conjecture be not found to be more than a mere guess, that for about sixteen years our *Romish* enemies may prevail more and more. Though how far these may be lengthened out or shortened, we can only conjecturally judge of, from the future carriage of the reformed churches, under the circum-

stances they may be stated afterwards. *If any say*, that these are melancholy conjectures, I must tell them I cannot help the matter, for I must follow *the thread of the text and the aspect of the times*. If *they ask*, but when will the tide turn for the protestant church? I answer, when they turn more universally to God, and no sooner. But if *they enquire further*, whether the *sun of the popish kingdom* is not to be eclipsed himself at length? I must positively assert he will; else this *vial* were not a judgment upon him and the *Romish party*. But if yet again the *question* be, *when* this is to fall out and *how*? I must tell you, that I have nothing further to add to what I have said, as to the time. But as to the *manner, how this is to be done*, our text does lay a foundation of some more distinct thoughts. Therefore, in the fourth and last place, we may justly suppose, that the *French monarchy*, after it has scorched others, will itself consume by doing so; its fire, and that which is the fuel that maintains it, wasting insensibly, till it be exhausted at last towards the end of this century, as the *Spanish monarchy* did before, towards the end of the sixteenth age. And if we do now heartily and unanimously enter
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upon a war against *France*, with the assistance of allies, and be but vigorous and faithful in the prosecution of it, securing the source of money and treasure in the heart of *America*, and bringing the war into the bowels of a nation, where a young monarch is hardly established; I say, if we do this, without losing our opportunities, our peace and security may yet be lengthened out. Whereas if we suffer ourselves to be lulled asleep at this time, we may have cause to lament our not having improved our season. But seeing I am not called to give my advice one way or other, I shall leave the determination of such weighty matters to the wisdom of national councils. However as my duty is to pray for direction unto these, so I earnestly wish, that there may be nothing to stop the regular and secure procedure of public matters in this critical juncture; upon the wise improvement of which our future stability and peace does so much depend. And now, after all this, I desire you may consult a book I formerly published, called *the Rod or the Sword, or the present Dilemma of these Nations*. For you will there see more fully my thoughts of our times, and how the moral reasons given there, taken from the
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aspect of our age, though preached in 1692, and published the year following, do exactly agree with my present apocalyptical thoughts.

One thing only I shall further take notice of here, upon the occasion of the *king of Spain's* death, that God seems to mark out great things sometimes by very minute ones, such as *names*, e. g. as the *Spanish monarchy* began with *Charles* the Vth. (as to the *Austrian family*) so it has now expired in one of the same name; which I the rather observe, because of many instances of the same kind. Of which number take these following: *Darius the Mede*, as *Daniel* calls him, (though *Xenophon* call him *Cyaxares*) the *uncle of Cyrus*, was the *first Medo-Persian monarch*, after the destruction of the *Babylonian*; and *Darius Codomannus* was the last. *Ptolomeus Lagi* began the *Egyptian* kingdom after *Alexander's* death, and *Ptolomeus Dionysius* was the last of that race. *Augustus* fixed the *Roman* empire, and it ended in *Augustulus*. The eastern *Roman* empire was erected by *Constantine the Great*, and expired with *Constantine Paleologus*. The *Scots* race came into *England* in a *James*, and has gone out again in another of that name. And whether *William the Third*,
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king of England of that name, as well as the *Third William Prince of Orange*, be likely to be the last both these ways, is left to *future time* to unriddle. Only I pray that God may long preserve him, and us by him; and may he live to be a further scourge to *France*, and a terror to *Romanists*.

But secondly, to proceed with my other conjectures relating to the remaining vials, I do further suppose that

The fifth *vial*, ver. 10, 11, which is to be poured out on the seat of the beast, or the dominions that more immediately belong to, and depend upon, the *Roman see*; that, I say, this judgment will probably begin about the year 1794, and expire about A. C. 1848. So that the duration of it, upon this supposition, will be for the space of 54 years. For I do suppose, that seeing the pope received the title of *supreme bishop* no sooner than An. 606, he cannot be supposed to have any vial poured upon his seat immediately (so as to ruin his authority so signally as this judgment must be supposed to do), until the year 1848, which is the date of the 1260 years in prophetic account, when they are reckoned from An. 606. But yet we are not to imagine that this
vial

vial will totally *destroy the papacy* (though it will exceedingly weaken it), for we find this still in being and alive, when the next vial is poured out.

The sixth *vial*, ver. 12, &c. will be poured out upon the *Mahometan Anti-Christ*, as the former on the *papacy*. And seeing the sixth trumpet brought the *Turks* from beyond *Euphrates*, from crossing which river they date their rise, this sixth vial dries up their waves, and exhausts their power, as the means and way to *prepare and dispose the eastern kings and kingdoms to renounce their heathenish and Mahometan errors, in order to their receiving and embracing Christianity*. For I think this is the native import of the *text*, and not that the *Jews* are to be understood under this denomination of *the kings of the east*, which is such an odd straining of it to serve a turn, as I cannot admit of. Now seeing this *vial* is to destroy the *Turks*, we hear of *three unclean spirits like frogs or toads*, that were sent out by *Satan*, and the remains of the *polity and church of Rome*, called the *beast* and the *false prophet*, in order to insinuate upon the *eastern nations*, upon their deserting *Mahometanism*, to fall in with their *idolatrous and spurious Christianity*,
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rather than with the *true reformed doctrine*. And these *messengers* shall be so successful, as to draw these *eastern kings* and their *subjects*, and with them the greatest part of mankind, to take part with them. So that by the assistance of these their *agents* and *missionaries*, they shall engage the whole world, in some manner, to join with them in rooting out the fains. (And here in a *parenthesis* Christ gives a *watchword* to his servants to be upon their guard in this hour of trial, *ver. 15.*) But when the pope has got himself at the head of this vast army, and has brought them to the *place of battle*, called, Armageddon, (i. e. the place where there will be a most diabolical, cunning, and powerful *conspiracy* against Christ's followers;) then immediately doth the *seventh angel* pour out his vial, to their ruin and destruction.

The seventh *vial* therefore being *poured out on the air*, *ver. 17*, brings down *thunder*, *lightning*, *hail*, and *storms*; which, together with a terrible *earthquake*, destroys all the *Anti-Christian nations*, and particularly *Rome*, or *mystical Babylon*. And as Christ concluded his sufferings on the cross with this voice, *It is finished*; so the churches sufferings are con-

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cluded with a voice out of the *temple of heaven*, and from the *throne of God and Christ there*, saying, *It is done*. And therefore with this doth the *blessed millennium of Christ's spiritual reign on earth* begin; of which, and what may be supposed to follow, we took some notice above.

Now seeing these *two vials* are, as it were, *one continued, the first running into the second, and the second completing the first*; the one giving us an account of the *beast's preparations* for warring against the saints, and the other shewing the *event* of the whole: there is no need to give you any conjectures about the conclusion of the *sixth vial*, or the beginning of the *last*; only you may observe, that the *first* of these will probably take up most of the time between 1848, and the year 2000; because such long *messages, and intrigues*, (besides the time spent before in destroying the *Turkish empire*) and *preparations* for so universal a war, must needs take up a great many years: whereas our blessed Lord seems to tell us, that the destruction of all those his enemies will be accomplished speedily, and in a little time, in comparison of the other vial. Supposing then that the *Turkish monarchy* should
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be totally destroyed between 1848, and 1900, we may justly assign 70 or 80 years longer to the end of the sixth seal, and but 20 or 30 at most to the last. Now how great and remarkable this last destruction of the papal Anti-Christ will be, we may guess by that representation of it, chap. xiv. 19, 20, where it is set forth under the *emblem and character of the great wine-press of the wrath of God* (which can refer to nothing properly but the event of the seventh vial, as I might shew at large had I time). Now this *wine-press is said to be trodden without the city*, (viz. of Jerusalem or the church, seeing this is called *the city*, in scripture stile, as Rome is called the *great city*) in *Armageddon*, Rev. xvi. 16, which may bear allusion to *the valley of decision*, Joel iii. 2, 12, 14. However the greatness of this slaughter appears in this, that the blood is represented to flow in such a current as to reach even to the *horse bridles*, viz. of the servants of God, employed in this execution; for without doubt this relates to what we have chap. xix. 14, which I beseech you to compare with this place. For ye will find that *a large account is given of the fall of Babylon*, chap. xviii, and *of the triumph of the church upon her final vic-*

*tory over this enemy, chap. xix. 1, &c. And among other things spoken of relating to the battle and victory obtained at Armageddon, ye have this account of the General and his victorious army, ver. 11, &c. And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat on him was called faithful and true.—And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses.—And he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of God.—And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to fight with Him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast and the false prophet were taken—and both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. And now to return to the representation of this slaughter, by the wine-press of blood, chap. xiv. 20, it is further said of it, that it flowed to the height of the horse bridles, for the space or extent of 1600 furlongs. So that Armageddon seems to be denoted here, in the extent of it, as the
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field of battle, which is now turned into a *field of blood*. Now what place can we imagine to be so properly meant by this as the *territory of the see of Rome in Italy*, which (as Mr. *Joseph Mede*, who first made this observation, says) from the city of *Rome* to the furthestmost mouth of the *Po* and the *Marshes of Verona*, is extended the space of 200 *Italian miles*, that is exactly 1600 *furlongs*; the *Italian mile* consisting of eight *furlongs*. Now the Hebrew word *Armageddon*, or *Harmageddon*, may be justly derived from חרמה, which signifies both a *malediction* or *anathema*, and a *destruction* or *slaughter*, and נרון, or more fully נרחון, which signifies *an army* or *their army*. So that both the *anathemas* darted against the saints by the *Romanists*, and their *armies* made use of against them (all which proceeded from *Rome* *papal*), may be here alluded to, in the *expiration* of both their *ecclesiastical* and *temporal interest*. So that this conjecture upon the name does confirm that other of Mr. *Mede*, that the *stata della chiesa*, or the territory and possession of *Italy* belonging to the *see of Rome*, is the place called *Armageddon*, where the final destruction of *Anti-Christianism* will be.

And now, my friends, I have fulfilled my

promise to you, in giving you not only a *resolution* of the grand apocalyptical question, *when the papacy began, and when we may suppose it will end*: but some considerable *improvement* of it, with respect to the knowledge not only of *times past*, but that particular period we are now under, together with *conjectures* (and some of them I am sure new and uncommon) about *future time*. By all which I hope I have given the world such a *key* to unlock all the chambers of the book of the Revelation, as I hope I may venture to say (if considered and used impartially, judiciously, and diligently), will be found to give some new light to us in our mental journey through the mazes and turnings, and dark passages thereof. And had I not been so confined, as you may see I have been, I might have cleared a great many other dark things in this prophecy. But, seeing I could not neglect this opportunity of presenting these thoughts to the world, as a new year and new age's gift at once, I do therefore hope you will the more easily excuse what may seem dark or defective in this discourse; as considering how much I am straitened, not only as to the limits of paper I must keep to, but of time also.

Now

Now seeing I have already given you a *theoretical improvement* of the question I have presented you with a resolution of, all that remains is to bring you from *speculations* and *notions* to *practice*; that your thoughts may be so seasoned with a serious and deep sense of your duty and interest, that you may get advantage both by the perusal of my *preceding Apocalyptical Meditations*, and the *following Discourses*: that after you have considered the duty of *improving your time* (which, together with some other things I am now to treat of), you may make application to yourselves of what I have said concerning *God's dwelling with men upon the earth*, so as ye yourselves may become temples of the living God; seeing God hath promised * this privilege to all true Christians, saying, *I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people.* And when you have thus applied to yourselves the first of the following Discourses, I hope you will not reckon it lost time to consider what I have said as to the *ministerial work*, especially the *application*, as to that *part of it*, at least, which does immediately relate to you and all Christians, as well as ministers; that

* 2 Cor. vi. 16.

this way you may learn to join in with Christ's ordinances for the future, with greater seriousness, and in order to further good, than perhaps any of us have yet attained to do. And when you have improved this way also by the perusal of the *second Discourse*, let me desire you to read the last concluding one, with serious meditation, in order to see the connexion and design of the whole. For though it be short, yet it contains much in little, and may be of use to introduce your minds to some further and more distinct apprehension of our *holy religion*, as it centers in *Jesus Christ*. And when you have thus perused and considered both this and the following Discourses, I am willing you should think as meanly of both me and them as you please, upon condition that ye may this way value the *holy Scriptures* more. For, as my design, in all my performances of this kind, is to dig my materials from the fruitful and rich mines of this Divine depositum and sacred treasure; so I have no other end than to lead you in there also, that ye may be more and more enriched with the *saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus*. In order to this, therefore,

Let me, in the *second place*, suggest something

thing here, by way of a *practical improvement* of what I have said above, especially as to that part of our discourse which I was last upon, relating to the apocalyptical times and periods, with the transactions of the same, in as far as they concern us. And what I have to say here I shall propose by the way of *observations*, which may be of some *use*, I hope, both to *regulate our thoughts and actions*, while we live in this world, *in relation* to the concerns of the church of God.

The first *observation* is, *That it may justly be looked upon as an eminent confirmation of the truth of Christianity, that so wonderful an account should be given of the transactions of the world, so long before they came to pass.*

The verity of our holy religion is proved from two things principally, *viz. miracles and prophecy*; and both these arguments have been excellently improved by learned men. But yet, as the *first* of these was perhaps the principal and most convincing *topic* to those that lived in our Saviour's days; so I look upon the *second* to be the most considerable to those that live in after ages. Nay we find that Christ himself did not lay the foundation of the belief of his *mission* on *miracles alone*, but
seemed

seemed to build the faith of his disciples chiefly on the *Old Testament prophecies*, as he did to the *two disciples going to Emmaus*, *Luke xxiv. 27, &c.* And, I suppose, it is too plain to need any proof, that the *apostles* did ever insist upon the *prophecies of the Old Testament*, more than either upon Christ's miracles or their own, in order thence to demonstrate that Christ was the *Messias*. For *the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy*, *Rev. xix. 10, i. e.* (as I understand the words) *the Spirit of prophecy is the great standing evidence and testimony of the divinity of Christ, and of the verity of his word.* And therefore (as the angel argues with *John*) he only is to be worshipped who is truly God, and who inspires his servants with the gift of knowing things to come.

It has therefore been the work of learned men in all ages to prove that Christ was the *true Messias*, and consequently that his *institution of religion was truly divine*; by shewing how punctually the *Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in him*. But I am much mistaken, if an impartial considerer of the *New Testament prophecies* may not find some things that do almost as plainly characterize several
later

later events, as the ancient prophecies did the former. And of this, let what I have said of *the sixth and seventh seal, and fifth and sixth trumpet*, and of *the slaughter of the witnesses*, be taken as instances. Or if this will not be allowed, let it be considered, that we see the full completion of the Old Testament prophecies relating to the erection of Christianity, whereas we see not the entire fulfilling of the apocalyptical ones. Therefore we must make allowance for the different representation of the one and the other of these. For they only that shall live after the great battle of *Armageddon* is over, can see the exact fulfilling of this prophecy in the destruction of Anti-Christ, with the same advantage they see also the fulfilling of *Daniel's* visions with respect to the coming of the Messiah and his death. We therefore now have no more advantage as to time, in explaining and understanding this latter event, than the *Jews* had as to the first, who lived in the days of the *Maccabees* while *Daniel's weeks of years* were running out. And I question, if they then did understand the periods of time they were under, more clearly, if at all so distinctly, as we do the times that have past over the Christian church,
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and that part of time we are now under. Therefore I say, we have great reason to thank God, that so much of this book is already made so clear to us, as to prove confirming thus far to our faith. For whatever differences have been among the most eminent interpreters of this book, as to particular calculations and accommodations of things; yet they have all of them agreed in the main foundations of the interpretation thereof, which I have built upon (excepting *Grotius* and *Hammond*, whose *hypothesis* has had few followers, and will have fewer), as *Dr. Cressener* has irrefragably proved in his book, entitled, *A Demonstration of the First Principles of the Protestant Applications of the Apocalypse*. So that there are two things almost equally strange to me, that the *Jews* should own the verity of the Old Testament, and particularly of *Daniel's* prophecy, and not see that the *Messias* is come; and that the papists should believe the Divinity of the New Testament, and particularly of the Revelation, and not see that their church is Anti-Christian. But while I admire the wilful stupidity of both these parties, I cannot but admire also the wisdom of God in making use of both these in his providence to confirm

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to us the verity of Christianity, in prophesying both of the one and the other so long before, and in continuing them to this day as standing monuments of the Divinity both of the Old and New Testament. But besides this, there is

A second *observation*, that may be of great use to us this way also, namely, *that this book represents to us, as in a small but exact map, the steadiness and exactness of Providence, and Christ's government of the world.*

For here we see the various and seemingly confused events of Providence so exactly methodized, as to make up one uniform and noble piece: the seeming discords and jarring sounds of things, being so disposed by infinite wisdom, as to make up one perfect harmony. Here *piety and wickedness, angels and devils, the church and Anti-Christ*, act various and contrary parts; and yet Christ makes use of all for noble purposes, and carries all on for one great end.

And now, as in other respects, so in this, we may take notice of the *perfection* of the *holy Scripture*; that what is wanting in *history* is made up in *prophecy*, which in some sense is history also. For if history, in the
general

general notion of it, be *an account or relation of the actions of men in the world*, prophecy is no less a *species* of this, than that to which the name is most commonly appropriated. For as that is a relation of things past, prophecy is an account of things to come. Now as *Daniel* makes up the *hiatus* or defect of the history of the Old Testament, so the *Revelation of John* supplies that of the new, by leading us down from Christ's first to his second coming.

And here let me observe, that these two books give us the exact plan of a Divine history, which never yet was given; the only essay towards something of this kind, that I know of, having been given by a * near and dear friend of mine. For though there have been many ecclesiastical as well as civil histories written, yet none of these run in the strain of scripture history, where all matters of fact are related not so much in a reference to men as in relation to God, and his providence in governing the world.

A third *observation* is this; *that we may*

* My father in his *third part of the fulfilling of Scripture*, called, *Scripture Truth confirmed and cleared, by some eminent Appearances of God for his Church, under the New Testament.*

now, after what I have said, attain to a distinct view of what part of this prophecy is past, and what remains yet to be fulfilled.

Of this I shall say nothing directly at this time; seeing the preceding scheme I have given of the apocalyptical periods may, I humbly hope, afford you a sufficient thread to regulate and fix your thoughts and meditations in relation to this subject. Only I shall hint some things to you, that are deducible from what I have already said this way.

Therefore first let me advise you not to suffer yourselves to be deluded with the specious or confident pretences of some men; when they go about to impose not only upon themselves but upon the world, by their notions relating to the sudden coming of Christ to judge the world, or to the speedy destruction of the papacy. I love to expose no man's weaknesses, and I perfectly abhor the way that of late is become modish, to rip up and publish personal failings. And therefore I shall neither trample upon the graves of the dead, nor affront the living; as remembering that we do all know in part and prophesy in part only. But, without detracting from others, I do in faithfulness and love desire ye may not
suffer

suffer yourselves to be imposed upon by a vain imagination that the end of things is so near, as some both of old and of late have pretended to foresee. For, from the scheme I have given you, ye may easily see, that there are many and great events to fall out before the final Fall of Anti-Christianism, and more before the consummation of all things.

And second, as I would not have you to suffer your *hope* to carry you too far, so neither your *fear*. For as the warm imagination of some men has represented to them the Fall of Anti-Christ and the day of judgment so near, that these must happen in their times: so the melancholy and fear of others has so far wrought upon them, that they have fancied the great slaughter of the witnesses is yet to come. And of both these sorts of men this observation will be found generally to be true; that those, over whose reason fancy and imagination have the ascendant (whether it be an airy or sprightly, or a dull and melancholy one), have still limited great events to their own time, and most commonly to a very few years. But I am much mistaken if I have not proved, that the universal slaughter of the witnesses is already past; though, at the same time,

time, I do readily grant that there is just ground to fear that we are near some very trying judgments, of some years continuance. But I have said enough of this above, and therefore shall add no more here.

But third, seeing I have touched but slightly upon the *millennium*, or the thousand years reign of the saints on earth, I shall desire you to think a little further on this, as the greatest event that is to happen before the end of the world.

I dare not indeed expatiate upon this vast subject; only I shall suggest a few things concerning it. The first is, that this is to begin immediately after the total and final destruction of *Rome* papal, in or about the year 2000; and that therefore Christ himself will have the honour of destroying that formidable enemy, by a new and remarkable appearance of himself, as I said above. But, secondly, we must not imagine that this appearance of Christ will be a *personal one*, no more than his appearance in the destruction of the *Jews* by *Vespasian* and *Titus* was such: for *the heavens must retain him until the great and last day of the consummation or restitution of all things*. Thirdly, Yet we must have a care of confounding this

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millenary peaceful state of the church, with the day of judgment: seeing nothing is more plainly distinguished, than these are in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation; where it is told us, That after the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be again let loose, and men shall apostatize almost universally from Christ, and make war against the saints; and that after the destruction of those enemies, the day of judgment shall commence. And therefore, fourthly, we are not to imagine that the millenary reign of the saints shall be free from all mixture of hypocrisy and wicked men, or from sin and trouble: seeing the sudden and general apostasy that follows that period is a demonstration, that all were not Israel that feigned themselves to be of it, and wanted therefore only an opportunity to shake off the church's yoke. Nay, the expiration of that period shews, that long peace and prosperity must have corrupted the church itself; else it cannot be conceived to be consistent with the equity and goodness of God to suffer her enemies to go so near to the total extirpation of his own professing people.

These things I have hinted thus, because I have no time or room to insist upon them as

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the subject does require. But I do the more readily pass them now, because a * late learned author has materially considered them, at least the three last of them; wherein he has very much confirmed my apocalyptical thoughts, which several years ago I had entertained upon this head.

And the same † author has prevented my inquiry concerning the call of the *Jews*, and their national conversion to Christianity: for, as I took notice before, I could never fall in with the strained interpretation of *Rev. xvi. v. 12*, as if by *the kings of the east* the *Jews* were to be understood, and that consequently their full conversion was to be under the sixth vial. Therefore after various thoughts upon this head, being satisfied that the *Jews* were to be converted, and that this great event could not be wholly left out in the *Revelation*, I did at last conclude that this must not be (whatever particular conversions of some part of them might happen) until the final destruction of the popish party; whose idolatry, vil-

* Dr. *Whitby's* Treatise of the *Millennium*, added to his Paraphrase and Comment on the Epistles.

† The same Author, *ibid.* and on the 11th of the *Romans*, and in the *Appendix* to the same.

lanies, lies, and legends, and bloody temper, is the chief thing that prejudices them against Christianity. So that I did at length conclude, that the resurrection or revival of the ancient Jewish church, is understood by the resurrection of the martyrs, *chap. xx. v. 4*, who being thus added to the true reformed Christian church, and making up one body together with those Gentile believers, in * *the fulness* or ripened state of the Gentile church, shall be to them *as life from the dead*.

One notion only I crave leave to add to those of the above-cited author on these heads, *viz.* that I look upon the *millenary state* to be the most eminent and illustrious time of the *Christocracy* (I hope none will reject the word, though it be new, seeing it is so expressive of the thing), wherein Christ will revive, but in a more spiritual and excellent way, the ancient *theocracy* of the *Jews*. For as under *Moses*, the judges and kings of *Judah*, God acted as King of the *Jews* (or Christ rather in a more peculiar and immediate sense, as I may perhaps have an occasion afterwards to prove to the world), so I do expect, that after God has delivered his Christian church from

* See Rom. xi. 15, 25.

spiritual *Egypt*, and destroyed his enemies in the Red Sea of their own blood, he will once more exert his power and authority, and our blessed Redeemer will reign as King of his people, not indeed in such a pompous way as among the Jews of old (for *John* saw no temple in the *New Jerusalem*, Rev. xxi. 22), but in a way adapted to the *New Testament* dispensation, and more immediately preparative unto, and typical of, the state of glory in heaven, after the day of judgment is over.

And now that I am upon this great prophetic event, I cannot forbear to give you a new conjecture upon the *last numbers of Daniel*. For his *seventy weeks of years*, chap. ix. 24, are already remarkably elapsed in the incarnation and death of our Redeemer. And the number of *2000 days*, chap. viii. are plainly to be interpreted of the time of *Antiochus Epiphanes's* profanation of the sanctuary: for as it is restricted to that short period, as is plain to any that will attentively consider the words themselves, ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, especially if compared with ver. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, so the Spirit of God, by designing this period by the title of *παρασάβητον*, or a period of *evenings—mornings*, i. e.

natural days, does plainly assure us that we are not to interpret these days prophetically for years, as we are allowed to do the seventy weeks and other numbers. To return therefore to the *last numbers of Daniel*, there are *two distinct periods of time*, as I take them to be (though all other interpreters go another way), found in his twelfth chapter. The first is of a *time, times, and a half*, or *three years and a half*, ver. 7, i. e. 1290 prophetic days or years, as *Daniel* himself has it explained to him, ver. 11. This therefore is the same period of time that *John* borrows from *Daniel*, and accommodates to the duration of *Rome* papal, excepting that there is the difference of thirty days, or years; only that *era* of this period in *Daniel* is vastly different from that of *John*: for as to the *latter* we have seen it already; but as to the *former*, *Daniel* fixes it at *the scattering of the holy people*, or the *Jewish* nation, ver. 7, and at *the taking away the daily sacrifice, and the setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate*, v. 11. Now our Saviour, who was certainly the best expositor of his own word, explains this abomination that maketh desolate, and which was to pollute and ruin the sanctuary, to be
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nothing else but *the idolatrous and desolating Roman army*; as we see by comparing *Matt. xxiv. 15*, with *Luke xxi. 20, 21*. The *epocha* therefore of the time, times, and a half, in *Daniel*, or his 1290 years, must be the year 70, from the birth of our Saviour, *when Jerusalem was taken*, if we should consider the beginning of the setting up the abomination that maketh desolate. But seeing the æra of this number is not the beginning of the conquest of the *Jews*, but the complete scattering of that nation, or *the accomplishing the scattering of the power of the holy people*, as the words are, *ver. 7*, and the full setting up of the abomination that maketh desolate, *ver. 11*, which was not done till *Hadrian's* time; who fully conquered the *Jews*, and built a city near the ruins of *Jerusalem*, which he called *Ælia*, building at the same time a temple to *Jupiter*, on the ground where the temple had stood, and engraving over the gate of this new city the figure of a swine, in derision of the *Jews*. Now this work was finished in or about the year 135. From whence the period of 1290 years, leads us down to A. C. 1425, which in prophetic reckoning is the year 1407. About which time the papal

power was at its utmost elevation; for after this time the *Hussites*, *Albigenses*, *Wickliffites*, *Waldenses*, *Pickards*, &c. began to fall before the *Romanists*, until they were, in a manner, totally extirpated before another century had well nigh run out. Now this dismal period expires about this time; and then there follows the second *period* of 1335 days or years, *ver. 12*, which being calculated from the year 1407, terminates *An. Dom. 2742*, i. e. 2722, of prophetic reckoning; which therefore includes the *begun downfall* of the *papacy* under the seven *vials*; and the *final accomplishment* thereof afterwards, together with the *greatest part* of the *millennium*, and consequently the great *conversion* of the *Jewish nation* during that period. And perhaps the begun apostasy of *Jewish* and *Gentile* Christians (which is to issue in an universal war against the saints, upon the expiration of the *millennium*) may begin about that year 2722.

And now that I have come again upon prophetic numbers, I shal' venture to digress a little more still, in giving you some further illustration of these two great periods, from the fourteenth chapter of the *Revelations*. Of which take these few hints at this time. In the

the first *place* then, ye have a description of Christ's followers adhering to him, during the reign and rage of Anti-Christ, from v. 1 to v. 5, inclusive; which must therefore reach down from *An.* 606, or 758 rather, to *An.* 1517. After which we have the begun revival of the church of Christ represented in the second *place* by the testimonies of the three angels, succeeding one another. The first *angel* has a commission to preach the gospel purely to all nations, v. 6, 7, which must therefore begin with the preaching of *Zuinglius* and *Luther*; and does include, I humbly suppose, the periods of the *four first vials*. The second *angel* follows, v. 8, and proclaims the fall of *Babylon* or the papacy; and must therefore be synchronical with the *fifth vial*, being poured out upon the seat of the beast. The third *angel* gives men warning that they should not join with the beast, and denounceth severe judgments against them that shall be found to do so, v. 10, &c. Which therefore relates to the last part of the time of the *sixth vial*, when the unclean spirits go forth to insinuate into the nations, in order to engage them to make war against the saints, *chap.* xvi. *ver.* 13, 14, 15, 16. Now after all these things, we have,
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in the third *place*, a typical or emblematical account of the deliverance of the church, and of the destruction of the bloody persecuting Anti-Christian party. Therefore we have, first, the emblem of *an harvest*, which seems immediately to relate to Christ's gathering his church into a happy state, v. 14, 15, 16. And then, secondly, we have the representation of the final destruction of the *popish* party, under the emblem of a *vintage*, wherein the *bloody clusters* of the several *popish fraternities and communities* are to be bruised and squeezed to death in the *wine-press of God's wrath*, v. 17—20. But I have spoken already to this great period of time above, which issues in the *blessed millennium*; and therefore I shall say no more to it at this time.

Only there is one thing that falls in my way here, which ought not to be passed over in silence; and that is, to what period we are to refer the happy state of the *New Jerusalem*, chap. 21, and of the blessed *river and tree of life*, chap. 22. For I find interpreters at a mighty loss this way, whether these relate to the *millennium* or *heaven itself*, after the day of judgment is past. And indeed there are some things that seem inconsistent with either
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of these states. For what is said of the *nations flocking into this new state, and walking in the light of it, and of the kings of the earth, that they shall bring in their glory and honour to the church*, chap. xxi. 24, 25, 26, seems not to agree with the notion the Scripture gives us of the state of the glorified in the higher heaven, after the resurrection; but does exactly suit with the peaceful reign of the saints, when *Jerusalem*, or the church, shall be exalted above the nations, who shall all run in to her. And yet upon the other hand, there are things also that seem to be too great even for the blessed *millennium*, as we have given the notion of it above. Such is the account of the perfection of this state, *that it will be exempted from all death, sorrow, crying, and pain*, chap. xxi. 4. And yet as the former expressions may be adapted to the state of the church triumphant in heaven, in a spiritual sense; so these last expressions may be made to suit also with the state of the church on earth during the *millennium*, in a comparative sense, *i. e.* if considered with respect to the preceding afflicted condition of Christians.

Therefore seeing this last glorious scene of affairs may be interpreted in relation either to
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the one or other of these periods, I conclude that we ought to interpret it of both, *viz.* of the *millennium* in a *first sense*, and of the future glory of the church in heaven, in a *second and complete sense*. For as I observed above, that the sacred prophecies, particularly that in the twenty-fourth chapter of *Matthew*, and second chapter of the second epistle to the *Thessalonians*, are to be interpreted both in a first and second or ultimate sense; so I do believe we must of necessity understand the account of the new heavens and new earth, and of the heavenly *Jerusalem* in this book. And if this be once supposed, then it will be easy to adjust the seemingly different figures used by the Holy Spirit in this place: seeing the whole is so contrived, that it may correspond both with the millenary state and the future state of glory, *viz.* to the first as an emblem and type of the latter. So that as the destruction of the *Jewish* nation and church is given in such words, *Mat.* xxiv. as to become this way an emblem of the final destruction of the world; so likewise is the *millennium* so painted and described, *Rev.* xxi. as to be designedly given as a type of the state of the church triumphant in heaven, after the day of judgment is over.

A fourth *observation* from what I said before, is this; *that our reformers did not rashly, but upon just grounds, desert the Church of Rome, as Anti-Christian and apostatical.*

For, not to insist upon prophetic indications of the *Roman* church being indeed the great Anti-Christ, there are four things that lay a just foundation for all honest men's leaving that interest, viz. 1. *Gross errors, such as purgatory, human merits and works of supererogation, indulgences, transubstantiation, &c.* 2. *Horrid idolatry, in worshipping angels, saints, and canonized persons, together with images, statues, crucifixes, and a consecrated wafer.* 3. *The pretended infallibility of the Roman see, in imposing upon men's consciences what they please, and debarring us from reading the Scriptures ourselves, or making use of our own reason in the matters of religion.* And, 4. *The dreadful tyranny of that party, seen and felt both in their inhuman cruelties, persecutions, massacres, and diabolical barbarities used against all those that differ from them.* For the proof of all which things, let *Chamierus* be consulted, together with *Heydegerus de Babylone magna, Turretinus de necessaria secessione ab ecclesia Romana;*
and

and besides innumerable others, *Stillingfleet's* late pieces against the *Romanists*. For my time allows me not now to enlarge upon any of these heads.

Only, that I may not leave you without some specimen of popery, I shall copy out in *English* the twelve articles of the *Romish* faith, additional to the twelve Christian ones, which are contained in the apostles creed, as to the sum and substance of them. These twelve *additional articles* are contained in the famous bull of pope Pius IV. dated at *Rome* in the year 1564, in the ides of *November*, and the fifth year of his pontificate, which is to be found at the end of the printed canons and decrees of the council of *Trent*; where, after an enumeration of the primitive articles, beginning with, *Credo in unum Deum, &c. I believe in one God, &c.* he proceeds to charge all men that would be saved, to own and swear unto the following articles also; anathematizing all that do not so. These begin thus; *Apostolicas et ecclesiasticas traditiones, &c.* which take in *English* thus.

1. *I do also (i. e. together with the articles of the apostles creed) most firmly admit and embrace the apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions,*

tions, and all other observations and constitutions of the same (i. e. the Roman) church.

2. I do admit the sacred Scriptures in the same sense that holy mother church doth; whose business it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of them; which I will receive and interpret according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

3. I do profess and believe, that there are seven sacraments of the new law, truly and properly so called, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary to the salvation of mankind, though not all of them to every person. These are baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and marriage, which do all of them confer grace. And I do believe that of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders, may not be repeated without sacrilege. I do also receive and admit the received and approved rites of the catholick (i. e. Roman) church, in her solemn administration of the above-said sacraments.

4. I do receive all and every thing that hath been defined and declared by the holy council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

5. I do profess, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice

sacrifice for the quick and the dead: and that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is a conversion made of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion the Catholic church calls Transubstantiation.

6. *I confess that under one kind only, whole and entire Christ, and a true sacrament, is taken and received.*

7. *I do firmly believe that there is a Purgatory, and that the souls kept prisoners there do receive help by the suffrages of the faithful.*

8. *I do likewise believe that the saints reigning with Christ are to be worshipped and prayed unto, and that they do offer prayers unto God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.*

9. *I do most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God, and of other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration ought to be given to them.*

10. *I do affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and
that*

that the use of them is very beneficial to Christian people.

11. *I do acknowledge the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches; and I do promise and swear true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.*

12. *I do undoubtedly receive and profess all other things which have been delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and œcumenical councils, and especially by the holy Synod of Trent, and all things contrary thereunto, and all heresies condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the church, I do likewise condemn, reject, and anathematize.*

Lo here, my friends, you have a fair prospect of Popery, without any misrepresentation, or so much as comment: for these are the words of the creed itself, which all Papists are obliged to believe and profess, in order to salvation; and which all those who enter into religious orders do solemnly swear unto: and therefore it is plain that these things are not looked upon by the church of Rome as disputable opinions, but as necessary articles of faith; and therefore let the author

of the *Case of the Regale and Pontificate* see how he can make good the last concluding words of his book, which are these: *Concors Romanæ et Reformatæ Ecclesiæ Fides, &c. i. e. The Faith of the Roman and Reformed Church doth agree, or is the same, &c.* For if these things be so slight and trivial to him, that he can (as the Popish Gallican church doth) swallow and digest all, excepting the eleventh article, he must pardon others if they continue in the faith of the reformed church, as that which is opposite to the *Roman* creed in so many momentous particulars.

Nay, let me add one thing further here as a necessary consequence or inference from what I have said in relation to this consideration we are still upon; *That, as our reformers did justly separate from the Romish church, so we have just ground also to continue separated from that Anti-Christian party.*

Let others, under pretence of a dread of what they call schism, run back into Anti-Christian errors and heresies. Let them, if they are so disposed, forsake pure Christianity, that they may promote the priest's power, and adorn their altars with gold and jewels. And let them, in order to enslave men's conscience

sciences and bodies both, found a retreat to *Babylon* again. We, I hope, know our duty better, than to run the risk of damning our souls, by becoming renegadoes to that bloody and wicked party, against whose abominations so many thousands of our ancestors witnessed, under racks and torments, and at the stake in *Smithfield* and elsewhere. They believed that what they did and suffered was in obedience to the call of God, *saying, Come out from the apostate Romish church, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.* And God forbid, that any temptation should bring any of us back again to that sink of all impurities and errors, after we have enjoyed the sunshine of the gospel, in its purity and power, so long. Therefore, seeing we know what interest we are to keep to, let us be faithful to it, by doing all we can for its security, establishment, and honour. And if God call us to suffer for it, let us act as the former heroes of the reformation have done before us, that Christ may be glorified, and the church edified by us, whe-

ther it be by doing or suffering, by life or by death.

The *fifth and last observation* that I shall propose to your thoughts, as the conclusion of all I have said, is this, *That though we are not to live to see the great and final destruction of the Papacy, the blessed Millenium, or Christ's last coming to judge the world; yet seeing death is the equivalent of all these to us, if we be so happy as to get into paradise, we ought therefore accordingly to spend and improve our time, that we may partake of the future glory when we go hence.* I say, *Death is the equivalent of all these things to us, if we be so happy as to get into paradise:* for then we shall get the conquest over all Anti-Christian enemies, and be with Christ in a better state than any *earthly Millennium* can be supposed to be, waiting until *he* come to judge the world, and till *we* appear also with him in glory, having reassumed our then glorious bodies.

Improve your time, therefore, and all the opportunities and advantages of it, with your utmost diligence and seriousness, as remembering that ye are dying and accountable crea-
tures,

tures, and that your time is given you for this very end, that ye may prepare for a better world.

And now that we see the beginning, not only of a *new year*, but of a *new age*, I must give a further vent to my zeal and concern for your souls' good upon this great and practical head, viz. *the improvement of time, with respect to the upper world*; that when I am gone, I may, by what I have said, and am about to say, continue to speak still to those that shall survive me, and even (if this discourse last so long) to succeeding generations also. And I suppose ye will the more readily bear with me in this, when ye remember with what unanimity and importunity ye desired me to print a sermon on this head, which I preached on *new year's day* 1699, from Ps. xc. v. 12. For seeing I was prevented in yielding to your desire then, I shall lay hold on this opportunity to make amends, in some measure at least, for that seeming neglect, by presenting you with some useful hints on this subject.

And here, as I begin to speak upon this head, the story of *Xerxes* comes to my remembrance; who, when he saw his vast ar-

my of a thousand thousand men march by (with whom he expected to have swallowed up the poor *Grecians*), is reported to have wept, upon this thought, that before a hundred years should run out, none of all that multitude would be alive: little imagining, that before the end of that very year he was to see the destruction of almost all of them, and draw his last breath himself also. For methinks it is a serious and weighty thing to think, that before the end of this century all those that now make a figure in the world will have finished their course, and be gathered into heaven or hell; new actors coming upon the stage in their stead. And yet, while I lengthen out my meditation to the end of a century, I find just reason to contract my thoughts, and suppose I see both you and all others, that crowd our streets and places of worship, or fill remoter islands and continents, gradually dropping into an eternity, some this year, some the next, and so on.

But to proceed to the consideration of the subject in hand. I suppose I need not tell you what we are to understand by the improvement of time; seeing this is too plain

to need any explication in a general sense. And neither can it be dark to Christians in a spiritual sense : for it can denote nothing else, but *such a rational and religious regulation of our time and disposal of our talents and opportunities, especially as we live under the advantages and means of the gospel, that we may ever be occupied in doing and getting good, so as to find favour in the sight of God, and attain afterwards to the happy enjoyment of him.* For seeing, as the Apostle says, *Now is our accepted time, and day of salvation ; we ought to take heed to ourselves that we receive not the grace of God in vain**. We ought to reckon, therefore, that this space of our life is given us that we may be taken up in promoting the honour of God and our own and other men's good, as being in all these respects in a state of trial. Let us therefore improve our time, by labouring to gain our own assent and consent fully to the terms of the gospel ; by studying the Word of God more and more ; by a close and impartial trial of ourselves ; by frequent and fervent prayer ; and by an universal and constant obedience to all God's laws and in-

* 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2.

stitutions. And let us argue ourselves into this as our duty, by considering how dearly our Lord Jesus has purchased our day of grace and opportunity of salvation; how many have been damned and lost for ever, by their not improving this talent of time; how dreadful the condemnation of such will be, who choose darkness rather than light; how unreasonable it is to be so careful of the body and so regardless of the soul; how strange it is that we should not do that for our eternal advantage, which worldlings do for a little temporal gain; and lastly, how uncertain we are of the continuance of our time and season of grace.

And seeing, in order to improve time aright, we ought to lay hold of all the special seasons and peculiar opportunities which God puts into our hand for this end: these will deserve to be particularly considered by us. But since it is the work of prudence, that every man know and observe his own circumstances and providential occurrences, in order to a right improvement of them accordingly; all that I can do here is to hint at some generals this way. Therefore, 1. Let me advise you to make a right improvement of the circumstances

stances of your outward lot in the world. Are you in a state of *prosperity*? Then be thankful to your gracious benefactor. Are ye honoured? Improve this, that God may be honoured through you. Are ye in any place of power and authority? Lay yourselves out to advance the kingdom of God among men. Are ye rich? Remember what *Solomon* says, *that wisdom is good with an inheritance**; and therefore, serve God with what he gives you. But if ye be in *adversity*, despond not; but remember, that as prosperity gives men greater advantages for doing good, adversity affords more seasons usually for getting good: for in the day of adversity we are more ready to *think and consider* than in the time of prosperity, as *Solomon* says†: for then is the time and season to consider the vanity and uncertainty of the world, to know ourselves better and God more, and to prepare more readily and thoroughly for another world.

2. Improve your circumstances, in relation to company or retirement. If ye be hurried with company, labour to gain that by them which may in some measure make up your

* Eccles. vii. 11.

† Eccles. vii. 14.

loss of time. If ye can get no good from them, then study, if possible, to do them good, by insinuating what may tend to their advantage; and then ye can have no reason to reckon your time lost. But if ye enjoy the company of good and wise men, it is not to be believed what profit and advantage may be got by mutual discourses to edification, where men are communicative, and can bear with different apprehensions about things, without running into heats and quarrellings. But if we are shut out from company, we may justly look upon *solitude and retirement* as a happy opportunity of advantage and profit, if we do but know how to improve the same, by filling up such seasons with study, meditation, and prayer. 3. Improve the means and opportunities of grace and salvation; for the end of all that Christ has suffered and done for us is *to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to himself a people zealous of good works*. Therefore, let us so hear the word preached, and so join with the prayers of the church, and so partake of the ordinances of Christ, particularly that of the Lord's Supper, *that we may be built up a spiritual house, as lively stones concurring to the raising up of such*
an

an edifice ; and that we may become also a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable by Jesus Christ to God. And 4. If at any time, or upon any occasion, ye find the *Spirit of God* to move your thoughts and affections more sensibly than usual, as the angel moved the waters of the pool of old, Oh ! my friends, neglect not such a fair gale and favourable opportunity, but improve this happy season, and strike the iron when hot and malleable : for how dreadful must it be to quench the Holy Spirit, and stifle the convictions, motions, and influences thereof, especially such as are sensible and peculiar !

But seeing, to begin aright, is one great mean to carry on any thing successfully, we ought to set about the improving of our time as early as we can, without any delay or procrastination in a matter of this weight and moment : for it is only our present time that we can reckon ours. For as our *yesterdays* are irrecoverable, so our *to-morrows* are but *may be's* and uncertainties. Therefore we are always called to hear God's voice *to-day**, if we

* See Heb. iv. 7, and c. iii. 7, 13, 15 ; 2 Cor vi. 2 ; Luke xix. 42 ; Isa. lv. 6 ; Job xxii. 21 ; Mat. v. 25 ; Ps. cxix. 60,

will

will do it at all. And therefore let us *not delay, but make haste, to keep God's righteous and holy commandments.*

Now if we would improve our time and life to advantage this way, let us be sure not to neglect the morning of time. And here then, let me put you in mind of *four mornings* of time. The first is, *the morning of your life*, i. e. the time of your youth, health, and strength. Such of you, as have lost this season, in whole or in part, pray double your diligence, in the improvement of what remains of your time. But such of you as are young, be advised * to remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and act so as ye may afterwards look back upon your past days with satisfaction and pleasure. 2. *The morning of every day* is a time to be peculiarly improved for God and your own good; for the doing so has a mighty influence upon us as to the right spending of the rest of the day. It is a season that is not only *amica musis*, a friend to study, as the old saying is, but that is favourable also *orationi et devotioni*, to prayer and devotion: for while our minds are fresh and undisturbed with the hurries of company

* Eccles. 12. 1,

and business, it is certainly the fittest time for duty as well as study. And therefore the saints * of old were careful not to neglect this season. 3. Improve the *morning of every week* carefully, viz. the Lord's day. For as we discharge our duty then, we may expect God's blessing through the week more or less. But if we refuse to give God what is his due on his own day, we must not think it strange, if God withdraw from us on those days that he has allowed us to serve ourselves upon. And hence it is no wonder, if we find that true, which many have confessed with sorrow at the hour of death, that the profanation of the Lord's day has been the inlet to all their after sins and miseries both. And 4. Perhaps it may not be unprofitable for us, to set apart *the morning of every year*, to review what we have done and what has happened to us the year past, and to beg God's blessing through the year following. It has been the practice of some holy persons to do this; some reckoning the year, as it is usual with us in our computations, from the first day of *January*; and others reckoning it from the day of their birth,

* See Psal. v. 3, and xcii. 2. Job i. 5. Mar. i. 35, and Acts v. 21.

or baptism, or conversion; in all which every one may take which way pleaseth him best. And now that we enter upon the morning or beginning of a new century; let me beseech you to begin this work now, if ye have neglected it during the years of the last age, which ye have run through, whether these have been more or fewer.

Having thus given you an account of time, and the opportunities and seasons of it to be improved; I shall proceed *to recommend this duty from three considerations*, and then to direct you how to do it, by proposing three rules to be observed this way.

In the first place, therefore, let me earnestly recommend this duty to you from *three weighty considerations*.

The first consideration is this, That it is the duty and wisdom of every one of us, to be duly and deeply impressed with the sense of the worth and value of time.

I might take occasion here to shew you, from innumerable examples, that the best and wisest men in all ages, both Christians and Heathens, have been under the deepest and most constant impressions of the value of time. But, as this would be too long for this place,
so

so it is needless to insist upon it; seeing I believe ye can as little form an *idea* of a wise or good man, that does not value and improve time, as I can.

Therefore I suppose there is no need to prove to you the worth and preciousness of time. To you, I say, who know the uncertainty of it, and yet how much depends upon the improvement and loss of it. But if any of you need any awakening this way, consider how valuable time will appear to a convinced sinner when he lies upon a death-bed, who sees himself dropping into another world, and yet apprehends that his peace is not made with God. Oh, cries the poor wretch, that I had spent less of my time on the world and my lusts, and more of it in minding the good of my own soul! Oh that I had those hours and days back again that I spent in taverns and bad company! Oh for a year, or a month, or a week at least, of health and strength, to make my peace with God! And pray, my friends, were ye never sick, and under some such thoughts then? Were ye not sensible then of mispent time? Or did ye never promise amendment and reformation, if God should recover you? Where is now the performance
of

of your vows? Oh, if there be any that forget God, and neglect to do as they have promised and resolved, let them consider their duty and interest in time, lest God tear them in pieces when there is none to deliver them. Alas, my friends, what would those poor wretches give for one day, nay for one hour, who are now in the infernal prison? What would they give for one offer of a Saviour, who are now lamenting their slighting of the gospel, and their mispending their time and opportunities of salvation? Therefore do ye learn to value time more, and improve it better, before it be too late to retrieve lost opportunities. And this leads me to another consideration. Therefore

The second consideration is, That it is our wisdom, not only to be impressed with the sense of the worth and value of time, but to be duly and deeply affected and influenced this way, so as to set about the improvement of it, as our greatest and most concerning duty and interest.

For it is not speculation but practice that we are to mind here; and therefore if our apprehensions of the worth of time do not influence us to improve it, they will only tend to our greater condemnation. Therefore, that
what

what I have said may so affect you, as to incite you to your duty this way ; I shall not grudge a little pains in writing further on this head, in hope that ye will not be weary in reading what is written. Take it not amiss therefore, if I address you with some seriousness and warmth of affection, and, through you, all others that may cast their eyes upon these sheets.

My dear friends, some of you have lived twenty, some thirty, some forty, some fifty, some sixty, or more years in the world. Now I beseech you to consider what ye have been doing all this time. Have your performances borne any proportion to the mercies ye have received from God? Have ye been faithful to improve your talents for your God and Saviour? Have your convictions brought forth a saving conversion? Have your resolutions and promises been all performed? Has it been a matter of conscience to you, to serve God with the best of your time, the greatest vigour of your thoughts, the utmost energy of love and delight, and, in a word, with all your heart and strength?

If ye have been deficient this way, then pray consider, not only how impossible it is

to bring back any part of the time that is past, but how little, or at least how uncertain the time is, that remains to be lived over. And if any be secure this way, because they are young, or strong and healthful, let them remember how often the old carry the young to the grave, and the weak and sickly see robust and vigorous persons drop off before them. And what is our life at longest? Does not the scripture labour, as it were, under a want of metaphors, to describe its vanity, when it compares it to a handbreadth, a span, a vapour, the grass that is soon mowed down, the flower that quickly fades, the shadow that declines, and the tale that is told? How poor a thing then is it, to be able no otherwise to number our days and years, than by our being born at such a time, and having lived to such another time? There is therefore no more unreasonable desire in the world, than to live long, where there is no concern to live well; for this is only to wish to have more time to mispend, to sin longer than others, and to be more miserable in the other world. Besides, that it is impossible, as the course of things is now, to live long in a proper sense: for as the following distich expresses it;

Vivere

*Vivere quisque diu quærit, bene vivere nemo :
At bene quisque potest, vivere nemo diu.*

That is,

*To live long, all desire ; to live well, none ;
Yet all may live well, but none can live long.*

For is it not for this very end that time is given us, that it may be improved and lived well, in order to our being fitted and prepared for the happy state of a glorious immortality ? Surely God did never make so glorious a creature as man, endued with an immortal soul, merely to live the life of the beast ; to eat, and drink, and sleep, or to enjoy his sensitive lusts and pleasures.

Think then, my friends, that according as ye improve or misimprove time, ye are to be happy or miserable for an eternity. For we are now in a state of trial, and upon our behaviour, in order to be rewarded or punished afterwards, as we shall be found to have acted, when we come to be judged : therefore we may *rejoice now and take our pleasure* as we please. But we have reason to *rejoice with trembling*, when we remember that we are to be called before God, and judged for all we do now. For *they that live in the flesh*, according to their lusts, *must give an account to him,*

that is to be the Judge of the quick and the dead. And then every one of them will hear that dreadful word, *Take the unprofitable servant, and cast him into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Consider therefore, that it is impossible to recall any moment of time that is lost, in a proper and physical sense: and that thus it is a foolish and ridiculous wish; *O mihi præteritos referat si Jupiter annos!* Oh if God would give me back the years that are past! But yet, in a moral sense, we may be said to bring back past time, when by doubling our diligence we do, in some sort, retrieve the misimprovement of former days. But then it must be remembered, that this must be done now or never; for if our time comes to an end here, there is no returning to a state of trial again, such as we now enjoy: *If a man die, shall he live again?* No alas, says *Job*, *For as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth to the grave shall come up no more, (i. e. to live on earth again, as the following words explain the meaning.) He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.* Therefore let us
all

all say with him (and improve the thought),
*When a few years are come, then shall I go the
 way whence I shall not return.*

Now, besides all these things, it may be of great use to inforce this consideration, to take a view of the complexion and genius of our age, or the time wherein we live. For if the apostle *Paul*, when he exhorts his cotemporary Christians *to redeem the time*, gives this as the reason of his advice, *because the days are evil*: I am sure we have much more reason to call the days wherein we live by this name. For the sense of the apostle, when he calls the days wherein he lived *evil days*, is, no doubt, this chiefly, if not only, that they were afflictive and perilous times; for times of trouble are called *evil times*, or *evil days*, frequently in scripture. But we may justly take this in a larger sense, in reference to *our* times; for an age or time may be denominated evil, either with respect to the abounding of *errors*, *profaneness*, or *calamities*. And upon all these accounts these days of ours may be justly said to be evil. For *as to errors*, how many and how gross are these? How many deny the Lord that bought them? How many oppose his divinity and satisfaction both? Yea,

how many revile him as an impostor, and ridicule all revealed religion? Nay, how many dare blaspheme God, and deny his being, and even the first principles of natural religion? And, *as to profaneness and immorality*, where did we ever hear or read of more among Christians? Nay, it may be a question, if ever the heathens were worse than most Christians are now. And again, *as for calamities and troubles*, we see what other churches have suffered of late, and do suffer still; and we see in how tottering a condition all the protestant interest is. And though I believe it will prove a burdensome stone to the enemies of Christ, yet how far God may suffer them to prevail for a time, none of us know; only I am afraid we are upon the brink of very great troubles. And that (as I have hinted already) as we have been, like *Israel* of old, peculiarly blest with mercies and privileges, and are as peculiar and singular in sinning, so we are like to be punished in a peculiar and particular manner also. So that if there be (as sure there is) a rule to judge of the connexion of mercies, sins, and judgments, we may see our case, as well as that of *Israel* of old, in the prophetic threatenings of God to that people, when He
 says,

says, *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.*

Seeing therefore this is the state and complexion of our time, let us take heed to ourselves, that we be not involved in the sins of it, lest we come under the judgments also that seem to hasten on this generation. Consider, for this end, the apostle's advice; *Beware*, says he, *lest as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* Let us not therefore bear the instruction that causeth us to err from the words of knowledge; but let us beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, we fall from our own stedfastness.

But yet, be not so selfish as to mind only your own concerns, but remember that ye are members of a city, of a church, and nation, and that ye are members also of the catholic church of Christ that is every where dispersed. And therefore act as under all these ties and relations. And if ye can do no more, intercede at least with God, that he may be gracious: *stand in the gap*, that ye may, if possible, avert his displeasure. Act therefore, as *serious, faithful, and importunate remembrancers of the Lord, giving him no rest, but*

crying unto him night and day until he arise, and until he make his Zion and Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth.

There is yet a *third consideration* which I would add to the former, in order the more effectually to recommend this duty to you, *viz. The improvement of your time.* And this is what is indeed frequently insisted upon, but I am afraid very little lived up to, *viz. That we are in the sight and under the inspection of an all-seeing God, who is to be our judge at last.*

Oh, my friends, is this a matter only of speculation to you? Dare any of you do that in the sight of God, which ye would be ashamed to do in the view of the world? I remember I have heard of an eminently holy man, who, being tempted by a harlot to commit lewdness with her, in a place where she was mistress and had the command, seemed to consent for the present, with this condition only, that she should find out a close retirement, where none could be present and see what they did. Upon which she carried him from chamber to chamber, and from place to place, but he had something still to object against the privacy of every one of them. At length she brought him to

a very dark and obscure corner, telling him that none could see what was done but God and the Devil. What, said he, is that nothing? You must carry me where neither God nor the Devil can see us, else I will never do what you desire. And I remember also I have heard of another, who being tempted in like manner, consented upon condition of having liberty to choose the place; which being granted, he chose the public market place. When she refused this, saying, she could not for shame do so in the open view of the world: he replied, that he durst far less do this in the sight of God; and asked, how she durst do that in the sight of God, which she was ashamed to do before men.

Even the heathen moralist *Seneca* adviseth men to act in all things as if they had both God and the wisest and best of men looking on. *Set Cato, Scipio, or Lælius, before you,* says he, *or some such excellent person, upon whose appearing even the most wicked person would be frightened from doing amiss openly.* But he adds in another place, *What will it avail you to hide yourselves and your actings from men, since there is nothing concealed from God? for he looks into our breasts, and is present in our very*
minds

*minds and hearts. And elsewhere, It avails a man nothing, says he, to shut up or stifle conscience, since every thing we do lies open to God's view; and therefore our great wisdom is to act so, that we may approve ourselves to him.—*How consonant are such expressions to the sacred standard of our holy religion? And what shall we answer to our Master at the great day, if we suffer such persons to exceed and outrun us, who are Christians? Let us therefore mind the principle that swayed *Joseph*, when he said, under a very great temptation, considering his low and obnoxious condition, *Shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* And let us imitate *David*, who set the Lord always before him, and looked upon him as present at his right hand, to the end that *he might never be moved*, but be encouraged still to trust in him. For we are ever to remember, that *our secret as well as public sins are set in the light of God's countenance, seeing the darkness hides us no more from God, than the meridian light of the sun.*

But we must consider likewise, that we have not only a constant witness and inspector of our actions without us, but one within us, even our own conscience; which doth excuse

or accuse us, according as we behave and act. And as one says well on this head, *Quid prodest non habere conscium, habenti conscientiam?* i. e. What avails it to have no witness of our actions, while we have a conscience, that keeps an exact register of all we do? Only we must remember, that this is but a secondary witness; for *if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.*

And now, my friends, I have done with what I had to say to the *three considerations*, from which I proposed to *recommend and enforce this great duty of improving our time.* And I leave it to you to consider, whether what I have said be not sufficient this way, through the blessing of God, and your pains and concern to apply to yourselves what has been said.

Therefore, in the *second place*, I proceed to direct you how ye may attain rightly and successfully to *improve your time* to the best advantage, as ye are Christians and accountable creatures. And this I shall do by proposing *Three Rules*, which will take in all that is necessary or useful this way: though the *first rule* is the principal and only direct
one,

one, which doth take in the whole of our duty this way, the *second and third* being only subservient to this, though exceedingly useful, if not necessary also, in their places.

The *First Rule* is this, *That ye take heed that ye lose not your time, and the opportunities and seasons thereof, by sin and vanity; but that it be always filled up with the conscientious and diligent discharge of all necessary duties.*

This being, as I said already, the *principal rule*, in order to the *regulation* of our *time*; and being so contrived as to direct us both *negatively* and *positively*, as to *what we are to avoid* and *what we are to do*; I shall accordingly consider it distinctly in *both the parts* of it.

The *first part* of this rule teaches us, *how time is lost, and what we are therefore to avoid, in order to the right improvement of it.* And it is necessary to premise this, before we consider the other part; for we can only then apply ourselves to fill up our time wisely, in the performance of those duties, in the discharge whereof the redemption and improvement of time consists; when we apprehend what those things are, which are detrimental
and

and hurtful to our souls, both here and hereafter.

Now, in the general, we are to take care to rescue our time out of the hand of those two grand robbers, that thief it away from us, viz. *Sin* and *Vanity*. For as we are carefully to avoid the mispending of our time, by thinking, doing, or speaking what is sinful in itself, so we are to take heed of such things, which, though they are not simply sinful in themselves, are yet such trivial matters or by-concerns, as become sinful to us, when we spend too much time upon them, or mind them as if they were our most weighty and principal business.

But because those things that are evil and sinful in themselves, such as blasphemies and lies, immorality and profaneness, ought not to be so much as named among Christians, or have a moment's time allowed them, so as to be entertained or thought upon with delight or design, far less brought forth into life and action, we shall therefore pass by these wholly at present, in order to consider those things which, though lawful in themselves, ought not to be so minded, as to take up all or most of
our

our time. Allow me, then, to give you my advice in these things following.

Be not too prodigal of your time, in *the gratification of your senses, and the services of your body*. Let the *cultivation and adorning of your souls* take up more of your time than the *cloathing and dressing of your bodies*. Be not buried in *sleep and sloth* too long, while time is so short and uncertain, and ye have so much business to fill it up with. Neither do ye allow yourselves more time than is necessary or convenient for the *feeding and pampering of your bodies*. Be not like them, therefore, who are so severely reprov'd by God, for living sensually in this world, when they ought to have minded higher things. Of whom this sad character is given, *that they put away far from them the evil day; that they lay upon beds of ivory, and did eat the lambs out of the flock and the calves out of the stall, chanting at the sound of the viol, drinking wine out of bowls, and anointing themselves with the chiefest ointments: but that in the mean time they were altogether unmindful of the state of the church, and no way grieved for the afflictions of Joseph*. Amos vi. 3—6. Therefore, as the Apostle exhorts, *let us walk honestly,*

honestly, as in the day (or clear sunshine of the gospel), not in rioting (or in dancings, χοροί) and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: for these things, says he, are the making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Rom. xiii.

13, 14.

Spend not too much of your precious time in *divertive exercises and recreations*. We may indeed use these not only lawfully, but profitably, both with respect to the health and strength of the body, and the vigour even of the mind; which, being unbended for a while with innocent amusements, will be in better case to return again to close thinking. But we must not make recreation our business, as too many do, who are so intoxicated with the secret witchery of gaming, as to have their minds rendered almost incapable of any close application to serious and important matters.

Spend not too much of your time in *company and discourse*, unless business oblige you to do so. The company of atheistical and wicked men, especially if they be witty, and of an engaging temper, carries commonly an infection with it; and their discourse breathes

a secret and insinuating poison, that every one has not a strong enough antidote in his nature to resist. And though the company we associate ourselves with be good, yet we are to remember the old saying,—*Amici sunt fures temporis*, —that friends are frequently the thieves that rob us of our time; the commodity that of all others we are to be the most parsimonious of, seeing we can never retrieve its loss. To visit friends is often a great duty; but it is frequently to the hurt both of the visitors and the visited that these are made. For as much time is commonly lost this way to no purpose, so the discourses that are the entertainment of most companies are too often mere vanity, if not worse: for it is too customary at such times to give way to foolish talking and jesting, or to censorious reflections upon other persons.

There is an innocent freedom, indeed, and facetiousness in discourse, which is both allowable and pleasant: but alas, how soon doth this degenerate, if great care be not taken to keep our minds in a right poize! And if I appear to any to be too rigid in what I say on this head, let it be remembered, that Christ has forewarned us, *that we must give*

lusts, he may think very impertinently, and consequently, sinfully.

And this is not only the fault and weakness of *plebeian*, but of learned heads, who mispend time frequently as much as any other sort of men, upon their *difficiles nugæ*, their useless yet painful curiosities and niceties. This was the custom of the *learned doctors of old Athens*, who spent their days in almost nothing else, * *but telling or hearing some new notion, scheme, or theory*; and then disputing, *pro et contra*, for and against it. But while they were earnest to dispute about *forma substantialis, universale a parte rei, fuga vacui, apathies, the possibility of motion*, and such like *nugæ* and whims, they forgot God and solid religion; and were such sceptics, or superstitiously ignorant (for ye may interpret the words either way), that in the midst of their multitude of gods, they were willing to erect an altar more, with this inscription, *ver. 23.* Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *to the unknown God*. It is true, indeed, that there are many curiosities of this kind, that a wise man may improve to great advantage. But when they are made our main or only business and study, instead of

* Acts xvii. ver. 21.

being *parergons*, or bye-studies, we are certainly far out of the road of true wisdom. What profit has the *metaphysician* in abstracting from all particular beings, that he may define *ens* generically, as *unum*, *verum*, *bonum*, while he is ignorant of him that is truly such. To how little purpose at length will the *mathematician* find he has studied, in order to adjust and determine the proportions of points, lines, sides, and angles, if he neglect the proportions of piety and virtue? What will it avail the *astronomer* to see the planets through a tube, if he fall short of the happy world at last that is above all these? Is any man the better for being able to adjust and reconcile the *Egyptian*, *Chaldee*, and *Grecian dynasties*, by reducing all the different *æras* of nations to the *Julian period*, while he neglects to number his own days so, as to apply his heart to true wisdom? And lastly, what advantage has any man, by being able to speak all the languages in the world, while he worships and praises God in none of them?

Nay, I tell you further, that a man may even mispend his time in the service and worship of God, *circumstantially considered*. For though we worship God, yet what ad-

vantage can we reap by it, if we do so ignorantly, or hypocritically, or customarily, and merely for the fashion, or profanely and irreverently, or dully and heartlessly? Nay, we may lose our labour this way also, when by this we thrust out more immediately incumbent and necessary duties; or when we neglect the performance of this, till we be altogether unfit for it, offering thus to the Lord a corrupt thing, while we have a male in our flock.

And if thus we may mispend time, how much more are we like to do so, while *the cares of the world*, and the inordinate desire of what we call its *pleasures, profits, and honours*, juggle out religion, both from our thoughts and lives? *Solomon* adviseth us, *not to labour to be rich*; but he immediately subjoins, *Cease from thy own wisdom*. Whereby he insinuates, that a man must be mortified to his carnal and worldly ratiocinations, and taught by the spirit of God to know the true value of things, before he can possibly learn this lesson from him. However he positively determines these two things, That *he that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye*; and that *he that does so, shall not be found to be innocent*.

Mottos

Mottos that all men might find it convenient to write on the head of their books of accounts. And if *Solomon's* words have little effect on you, consider what a greater than *Solomon* says of a covetous or anxiously solicitous disposition and practice in the sixth chapter of *Matthew*, where he represents and condemns it as *unchristian and heathenish*, and as *unreasonable and pernicious*. And after all remember these serious and pungent words of his, *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*

And now I hope I have said enough as to the things we ought to avoid, if we would rightly improve our time. But seeing it is not sufficient to know how time is lost, unless we know also what we are to be occupied about, and wherein the best and wisest disposal of our time stands; therefore we must further consider the great and necessary duties with which we ought to fill up the seasons and vacuities of our life.

And therefore I proceed now to

The second part of this great and principal direction concerning the improvement of our time: Which is this, *That we take care to fill*

it up with the conscientious and diligent discharge of all necessary duties.

And here, though in the general we cannot but know, that our time is wholly to be taken up *in getting and doing good*; yet we must remember that it is only in relation to time that we are to consider our duties in this place. And therefore I am only to consider here those great and necessary duties which are always obligatory upon us, and the neglect of which is inseparable from the misimprovement of time. For it cannot be supposed that I should so much as hint all those things that come under the general notion of duty; or consider those things which particular circumstances and emergents render obligatory to us, or such duties which are called *relative*, from the stations we are in, and the relations we bear to others.

There are therefore a few things only which I shall recommend to you as altogether useful and necessary, and which none of us can ever plead exemption from.

And in the *first* place, let me beseech you to improve your time, by frequent, diligent, and serious reading and studying the holy Scriptures. In the *first book* of which ye will
find

find your minds led up to the first antiquities; which no other book beside can furnish you with any just account of. There we see the origin of man and the world; man's primeval state, when first created; the original of sin, death, and misery; the subversion of the first race of men, by the great deluge which heathen antiquities speak of only as through a cloud; the first spring and dawning of mercy and hope to lapsed man; the succession of the first and most primitive church, and the beginning and progress of *Gentile* idolatry, superstition and wickedness; together with the first original of nations, cities, arts, governments, languages; and in all these the superintending providence of God, in its justice and goodness, wisdom and steadiness. And by this knowledge, we bring back, as it were, all past time, and make it our own as to our profit and advantage. In the *other books of Moses*, we have an account of God's erecting a poor oppressed people to be a church, and God's peculiar possession: wherein we see his wonderful appearance for them, by signs and miracles; his strange and unusual way with them in all their journey, in trying, feeding, and preserving them; his giving them laws,

ecclesiastical, moral, and political ; his wrapping up most profound mysteries under ceremonies and customs, and his bringing them into a noble country with power and glory, destroying their enemies before them ; together with innumerable observable occurrences, and theoretical and useful things to be taken notice of therein. The *historical part of the Old Testament*, that follows that of the law, as the *Jews* call it, gives us a relation of most admirable and great revolutions and transactions, as ever fell out in the world. Wherein we may observe the various, and yet uniform steps of divine Providence in governing the world and the church ; God's trying, and yet rewarding the righteous ; his permitting sin, and yet punishing sinners. In all which occurrences we have the best examples that can be, to be imitated by us, and an account of the worst also, that we may avoid such pernicious courses. The *book of Job* is a mirror, wherein we may learn what afflictions the best of men are liable unto, and what reproaches they may unjustly fall under even by good men like themselves, through mistake and infirmity ; as also, how we ought to behave in the time of calamity, and what the end of the

Lord

Lord at length usually is. The *Psalms* are the most excellent model of practical and experimental piety, and the best prayer book and directory for devotion that ever the world was blest with. The *Proverbs of Solomon* are the most excellent and refined ethics that ever were published, or ever will be. *Ecclesiastes* is the noblest picture and demonstration of the world's vanity. And *Solomon's Song* the most spiritual pastoral, the finest allegory, and the divinest poetical description of the love between Christ and devout souls, that ever saw the light. The *prophetical writings* give us the noblest and distinctest idea of God's government of nations, and the righteousness and equity of all his providences and administrations; besides innumerable other lessons to be learned from thence.

And as for the *New Testament*, the first thing that occurs to us, is the most excellent part of the whole Bible; I mean, the *fourfold history of our blessed Saviour*. Oh, let your thoughts dwell long, and strike deep here; for all the historical passages of the Gospels, all the wise and sage parables to be found there, all the miracles wrought, all the prophecies mentioned, all the truths revealed, and all
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the counsels and exhortations there given; I say, all these are so many rich veins of what is more precious than the finest gold, and admirable and useful above all thought. The Book of the *Acts of the Apostles*, gives us a noble and impartial account of the beginning and progress of the gospel, and the first settlement of the church: wherein we have a naked and a clear view of Christianity in its pure and primitive dress; together with some most profitable examples, and useful discourses. The *apostolical epistles* give us a full and copious account of the religion of the blessed Jesus, both in its principles and practice, its original and design. So that these are sufficient alone, if rightly understood, to enlighten our minds, to influence our affections and designs, and to regulate our lives and conversations. And *the Book of the Revelation*, though dark and enigmatical, represents to us in an august and lofty manner, the rectorship of our Lord Jesus in governing the world, overruling and disposing the designs and actions of men, and making all things at length work together for the illustration of his own glory, and his people's good.

Thus we see something of the special properties

perties of the several parts of the Scripture, and what excellent things may be learned from thence. But let us consider also those properties that are common to the whole Bible, and every part of it. Let us therefore look upon all the books that compose this sacred volume, *as divinely inspired, and as designed, in all respects, for our profit and edification.* Therefore let us read and study them, *not as the word of men, but as they are indeed the word of God, i. e.* so as to prize and value them according to their worth; to love and delight in them; to praise God for them; to meditate upon them as men, not as children; and to conform our lives wholly to them. And in order to become thus the humble, impartial and obedient scholars of Christ, let me put you in mind of one thing, than which nothing is more neglected, and yet nothing more necessary in order to profit truly by the Bible, *viz. That ye have a care of laying down any opinion or scheme of opinions in matters religious, previously to your having impartially examined the sacred Scriptures in such matters.* For they that do so, come not to be taught of God, but to dictate to the Almighty, and are not afraid often to wiredraw the sacred text,

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in order to force it to speak, not what it really does, but what they would have it to do, as best suits with their prejudices, passions, and party-designs, that I say not lusts also. Therefore let me desire you (as I have often done from the pulpit) to make the *Bible itself*, and particularly the *New Testament*, your chief (and in a proper sense only) *system, confession of faith, and creed*. For whatever excellency there is in any human compositions of this kind, we are to own them no farther than we find them to agree and harmonize with the divine oracles.

In the *next place*, let us improve our time, by frequent, serious, and close meditation on divine and profitable things. Let the character of the blessed man, *Psal.* i. 2, 3, be ours, by our meditating on the laws and truths of God day and night. For to what purpose do we read the Scriptures, and other good books, if we be not at pains to penetrate into the things therein contained? Now it were endless, and in some sense impossible to name all those things that may be profitably thought upon. But perhaps it may not be amiss to suggest to you the principal heads of sacred theology; by which, as so many avenues, ye

may attain mentally to converse with God and truth.

In the *first place* then, meditate on God himself, his attributes, works, and word, and the blessed Persons of the Godhead. *Then* think on man in his first innocent state, in his lapsed condition, and begun recovery; and on thyself particularly, thy nature, thy faculties, thy state, thy faults, thy end, thy duties, and thy privileges and advantages. Meditate *often* on Jesus Christ, his person, his properties, his offices, his merits, his sufferings, his conquests, his business and work now in heaven, and his management of the church on earth, and the world in general. *Then* think of the holy Spirit, his office, work, and influences. *And* let the church also be considered in its obligations, ordinances, sufferings, progress, and victory. And think *likewise* of the particular state of the saints of God on earth, their temptations, the principles by which they are actuated, their conversation, and the promises made them. *Hence* let your minds be led on to contemplate the great blessings of true religion, such as conversion, justification, adoption, sanctification, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, communion

communion with God, the prelibations of
 heaven, and final perseverance. And *then*
 let your thoughts terminate upon what we
 call the last things. Think *therefore* on
 death, its certainty; yet the uncertainty of
 the time of it; the great change it brings
 upon us; how terrible it will be to be unpre-
 pared for it, and the happiness of being ready
 for so great a change. *Then* think upon the
 dissolution of this world, when the elements
 shall melt with fervent heat, and this vast pile
 of our planetary world become one great bon-
 fire. And *from thence* let your minds con-
 template the great day of judgment, those
 grand assizes, where all mankind must be im-
 partially judged, and sentence pronounced
 upon them accordingly. And *after all* let
 your thoughts pass beyond the limits of time,
 and step into the eternal state. *There* go down
 to the infernal prison for a while, and view
 the horrors of the place, the frightful aspect
 of the company, and the intenseness and per-
 petuity of the torments. *Then* mount the
 steep ascent, and soar aloft upon the wings
 of contemplation, to the blissful regions of
 the celestial paradise. There satiate your
 thoughts with the pleasures and beauties of
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the place, the felicity and joys of that state and government, the excellency of the company, the glory of the discoveries made there, the noble employment that takes them up, and the eternity and immutability of all these. Think *then* upon these few hints, my friends (where there are almost as many subjects as words), and ye can never want matter for your thoughts to work upon.

And *now*, seeing all our study and meditation must be so managed, that we may receive some real and abiding advantage, let us ever call ourselves to a serious and impartial account as to the spending of our time; for how can we satisfy ourselves, without conversing with our own souls, in order to know how it is with them? And how can we attain to know ourselves, if we never examine and try how it is with us? If merchants and men of business are so careful to set down every thing in their journals and books of account, that they may be able exactly to balance what they call their *debit* and *credit*, their losses and gains; ought not Christians to mind their eternal concerns with the like exactness and accuracy? How wonderfully does *Seneca* speak on this head, when he tells
us,

us, that in imitation of one *Sextius*, whom he highly commends, he had been accustomed to examine himself every night. “ When at “ night,” says he, “ the candle is out, and “ all is still and quiet, then do I look back “ upon and search all the day past, by mea- “ suring and running over all I have thought, “ said, or done. I hide nothing from myself; “ I overlook and pass by nothing. I say to “ myself, So and so thou hast done unad- “ visedly; do so no more. And again I ask “ myself, What evil have I healed? what “ vice have I resisted? what passion have I “ moderated? what lesson have I learned? “ and what good have I done? And O!” says he, “ what a sweet sleep follows after “ this recognition of a man’s self, when one “ is conscious of his impartiality and serious- “ ness, in the review and censure of himself “ and his own manners!”

And to this purpose we find an excellent direction in *the Golden Verses*, as they are called, of old *Pythagoras*, which begin thus, *μὴδ' ἑπνοῦ*, &c. The sense of which I render thus:

*Before thine eyes to slumber sweet give place,
Be sure the past day's journal first to trace.*

Survey

*Survey thy steps and actions all; then say,
Which good? which bad? how ordered were they?*

Oh then, my friends, let it not be said of us that we live in the neglect of this duty, lest Heathens rise up in judgment against us and condemn us.

But *since* we are not born for ourselves only, let us be concerned to promote the good of others also. Let us therefore improve time, by being useful in our stations to the church of God and good men, and to all as far as we can; for so we are obliged, as we are members of communities, cities, and nations, and as we are inhabitants of the world. And in order to be thus useful, let us set before ourselves the glorious example of Christ, *whose meat and drink it was to do the will of his heavenly Father, and who always went about doing good.* And therefore let us be ashamed to live as useless plants in the world, which do only cumber the ground.

And *in order* to perform all these things aright, and so to improve our time to the best advantage, let us be sure to spend as much of our time in prayer as possibly we can: for

as it is thus that we attain to most immediate and direct communion with God, so it is this way that we attain to be strengthened and directed in the performance of all the duties we are obliged to be taken up in. Therefore let us remember, that it is not without just ground that we are commanded *to pray always, and to pray without ceasing*. The sense of which expressions I take to be this, that as we are to keep up stated times of solemn prayer to God, and to have recourse to him, in a more special manner, upon extraordinary emergents and occurrences, in order to be peculiarly directed and assisted then from God; so we are ever to keep ourselves, as much as possibly we can, in a praying frame, and for this end to fill up all the vacuities of other affairs and studies with ejaculatory prayers and breathings. But besides all these things, there is one thing further that I never found any writer take notice of, that I look upon to be the principal design of such expressions: and this is, *That we be careful to prosecute the design of our prayers from one time of our life to another, waiting for the answer of them, and improving the same in praise, when received.* e. g. If a Christian pray
 4 long

long for a full victory over such or such a temptation or lust, let him prosecute this design in all his prayers until he receive an answer; which when he has got, let him turn this from the catalogue of his petitions to that of his thanksgivings. And so let him act also with respect to mercies to be received, promises to be fulfilled, and miseries to be averted.

And *thus* I have at length finished the *first and principal rule* I had to propose to you, with respect to the improvement of time in both the parts thereof. And now I am to hint to you *two more*, which are only subservient ones, though, at the same time, worthy of your most serious thoughts.

The *second rule*, therefore, is this, *That*, in order to the right improvement and disposal of time, *we do both dedicate ourselves solemnly to God, and as explicitly as we can, in order to spend our lives wholly in his service; and be concerned, in order to this, to keep a secret and exact register or diary of all our own actions, and the providences of God in relation to us.*

But seeing I have hinted something in relation to both the parts of this rule in another

discourse, *viz.* *That concerning the ministerial work*, I shall not therefore trouble you with any thing more upon either of these heads.

Only let me say this one thing further, in relation to the keeping of a diary or private register; that every man must be left to his own discretion as to the manner and method of adjusting those things that occur to him in his life. As therefore some may think it best to set things down according to the series of the time they fall out in; so others may look upon the method of heads, or common places, to be the best. And if any serious person shall think this last way the best (for as to the first the method cannot be mist) he may perhaps find these heads not unreasonable or useless, *viz.* *That after a short series of his life, to be further continued, he proceeds in this order.*

1. To consider God's Providence to him, in adapting and disposing of him for particular ends, agreeably to the faculties of his soul, and constitution of his body, together with his external circumstances, in a relation to both.

2. What his conversion has been, with the time and manner of it.

3. How far, and in what way, he has been led into covenant with God, with the renovations of the same.

4. What crosses and troubles he has met with, and how far these have been improved and sanctified.

5. The dangers, spiritual or temporal, he has been delivered from.

6. The sins he is most inclinable unto naturally, and those he has been most guilty of, and overcome by.

7. How frequently, in what manner, and upon what occasions, he has been deserted by his God; and, so far as he can conclude, for what ends these have happened to him.

8. What evidences he has had of the wrath and displeasure of God, upon the account of sin.

9. And what intimations he has met with of the love and kindness of his heavenly Father.

10. What temptations, inward or outward, he has been most assaulted by, and what he has found to be the best antidote and relief against these.

11. What observations and experiences he

has met with, to confirm him in the belief of the Christian religion, as to the being of God, the divinity of Christ, and the existence of invisible powers.

12. What observable and remarkable things have happened to him, in his business, studies, or converse with men, that may be of use to himself or others, as to life and conversation in the world.

13. Particularly, what has occurred to him in the remarkable turns and changes of his life, in health and sickness.

14. What intimacy, familiarity, and communion, God has graciously admitted him into with himself; and what answers and returns of prayer God has granted him.

And, 15. What special and peculiarly distinguishing circumstances he has been under, wherein the footsteps of a peculiar conduct have been conspicuous to him,

Under these heads I humbly suppose all things may be regularly disposed, that can be thought necessary to compose a private Christian's register. Though I presume not to dictate to any man, but leave every one to follow his own method.

The *third* and *last* rule is this, *That* (in order

der to the right regulation of time) *we set down some short, rational, and natural directory, according to which we may be enabled and assisted rightly to improve our time.*

But seeing every one is to compose this, according to his own circumstances, there is no man that can justly prescribe to another in this matter. Nay, there is none that can set to himself such a directory, as to all particulars, that he can be supposed to be tied up to, at all times; since the Providence of God is so various this way, that our circumstances render our condition, and consequently our duty, almost as different as the weather is. And, therefore, a *spiritual prudence* is that which is to every one the great directory of his life. For when the Providence of God renders our particular rules and methods impracticable, unlawful, or inconvenient, it is both our duty and wisdom to fall in with the present circumstances of things, rather than with our own arbitrary determinations; seeing then the state of the question is, *Whether God's method or ours should be followed?*

All, therefore, that I shall propose to you here, is the consideration of three things, which are easily minded, and may be put in

practice every day, whatever our circumstances are.

1. When we awake in the morning, let this be among your first thoughts, *How shall I spend this day to the best advantage, for the honour of God, and my own good?* And when you have considered what is most proper to promote these ends, then firmly *propose* to yourselves your business through the day, and fixedly *resolve* upon acting so; and accordingly proceed and fall to work.

2. In the middle of all your business, or studies, allow yourselves some time of breathing, in order to *reflect* upon these two things, viz. *What you are, and what you do*; putting these frequently to yourselves by way of query, thus, *What am I? i. e.* Am I sure I am in favour with God? Am I indeed regenerated? Am I spiritual in thought, affection, and design? And again; *What do I?* Am I employed as I ought to be? Are my ends right? Are the means I make use of lawful and proper? Are my studies, or my business, such as I ought now to be occupied about? Do I behave in all respects as one that is journeying towards the better country?

3. In the evening sleep not before you have examined

examined yourselves as to the actions and occurrences of the past day. But having spoken already to this duty, I shall only add here, that it will be of great use for you to examine yourselves as to two things, by way of question to yourselves; thus, *What has God's Providence been to me this day?* What have I seen or heard that deserves special observation and improvement? What mercies have I received? What troubles have I met with? What dangers have I escaped? Did God assist me, or desert me in my devotions and business? Have I learned nothing new from his holy word? Did he seem to receive, or shut out my prayers? And again; *What has my way been towards God?* Have I done nothing to dishonour him, or to discredit my profession? Have I acted so as to approve myself to my God, in thought and design, as well as in word and action? Wherein have I failed in my duty? What have I done for religion? And what for my own good, or the good of others? What have I done that I ought to beg the pardon of? And what have I to praise God for?

Now, my friends, I hope these three generals are easy, both to be remembered and practised.

practised. For as for the particular questions I have suggested, they are only proposed to shew more fully the design of the general ones ; and therefore every one may pick and choose, or vary from these, as his own circumstances do require, and as his prudence will direct : I only desire you then to remember the three heads themselves, with relation to the morning, the day, and the evening, as they are comprehended in these three *mnemonic* words, *propose*, *reflect*, and *examine*.

And thus I have at length come to the end of that which I had to say to you upon this great and practical head of *improving time to the best advantage* ; which I conclude with these few watch-words. Spend not your time so, as to be afterwards obliged bitterly to repent of what ye have done : spend no time on that which ye cannot review and look back upon with comfort : spend no time so, as ye dare not pray for a blessing from God upon what ye do : spend no time, without some respect to God's glory, or your own and others good. And be sure so to spend and improve your time, that your great work may be done before your life end ; that when your few days are lived over, ye
may

may joyfully enter in upon a happy eternity.

Now, having finished all I had to say, by way of improvement of the Apocalyptical thoughts I have presented you with, I desire ye may candidly interpret my design, and favourably construe my performance. And one thing I hope ye will remember, that seeing this discourse is by way of epistle, I have therefore used an epistolary freedom, both in what I have said, and in the way of writing, not tying myself up to so close a method as in other discourses, though I have not altogether neglected even that : but if I have failed in any respect, remember further, that I write to those I look upon to be my true, good, and kind friends. Let therefore the name and ties of friendship plead for me, where ye may discern my infirmities, and induce you to pass a favourable sentence upon my attempt to assist you in the way to heaven.

And now, that I write to such dear friends, and have mentioned the ties of friendship, let me beg of you that ye would make it your business to live together as such : for there is nothing Christ has enjoined us more, than
mutual

mutual love, infomuch as he has made it the badge of our Christianity, when he tells us, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*, John xiii. 35. And therefore it was one great end of his coming into the world, to introduce a *divine and universal friendship among men*. For as the devil promotes his kingdom in the world by dissensions, emulations, hatred, and malice; so our blessed Master carries on his, by union, gentleness, peaceableness, and universal kindness, love, and charity.

But besides a general friendship, it would be of great use to cultivate a peculiar one with one or more, whose disposition is most agreeable to ours. And seeing there is little of this now to be found in this selfish age, let me give you such a description of it, as may make you fall in love with it. And if this appear too florid, remember that as the subject itself is so, it is part of a youthful composition of mine, in a letter to a worthy friend, who had desired my thoughts upon this head many years ago. “ True friendship is a divine and
 “ spiritual relation of minds, an union of
 “ souls, a marriage of hearts, and a harmony
 “ of designs and affections; *which being found-*
 “ *ed*

“ *ed on a known agreeableness, and entered into*
 “ *by a mutual hearty consent, groweth up into*
 “ *the purest kindness, and most endearing love,*
 “ *maintaining itself by the openest freedom, the*
 “ *warmest sympathy, and the closest secrecy.*
 “ And such friends are as twins, every way
 “ alike; or like sweet flowers, agreeing in
 “ beauty, though perhaps differing in colour,
 “ like the rose and lily, the primrose and vio-
 “ let twisted round one another, and mixing
 “ both colours and smells. Or they may be
 “ compared to two pleasant rivulets flowing
 “ from one spring and fountain, though se-
 “ parated perhaps by some unlucky rising of
 “ the ground, yet meeting again in some kind
 “ and flowery mead, which they bless by their
 “ cheerful and gentle meanders; and it may
 “ be thence separated again at some distance,
 “ where they glide along silently, murmur-
 “ ing now and then to one another, and mu-
 “ tually complaining of the rude banks that
 “ obstruct their joining; until at length hav-
 “ ing run their full course, and becoming
 “ one stream, they pour themselves forth
 “ into the great ocean itself, and become one
 “ with it also. So that, like the rest of the
 “ bitter sweets of this life, friendship has its
 “ ups

“ ups and downs until it flow into heaven,
 “ from whence it took its rise ; which is the
 “ consummation of all divine friendships, and
 “ where all true friends do at length happily
 “ meet, never to part.”

And now, my friends, I shall conclude this long epistle in the words of a * famous doctor and father of the ancient church : “ Learn,
 “ oh faithful and religious men, and carefully
 “ apprehend the design of the gospel polity.
 “ For which end, study to conquer fleshly
 “ lusts, to be humble in heart, pure in mind,
 “ and masters of your passions. If ye are
 “ called to suffer, act heroically, and do some-
 “ thing over and above mere passiveness, for
 “ the honour of your Lord. If ye are un-
 “ justly treated, evidence that ye are not con-
 “ tentious : if hated, love your enemies ; if
 “ persecuted, endure it ; and if reviled, an-
 “ swer no man otherwise than by prayer and
 “ good wishes. Die to sin, crucify your af-
 “ fections for God, and cast all your care upon
 “ your Lord and Master. That thus ye may
 “ at length reach the glorious place, where
 “ millions of angels, and the glorious assem-

* Basil Magn. in his *Nyctēla* πρὸς τὰς νεύς. The words begin thus : *Μαθετέ οὐδὲ ὁ πῖς ὁς Ἀρθραπῶ*, &c.

“ bly

“ bly of the first born are praising God, and
“ where the holy apostles, prophets, pa-
“ triarchs, martyrs, and all the righteous are.
“ To this blessed society, let us labour and
“ pray to be joined, through Jesus Christ our
“ Lord, to whom be glory for ever.”

Now that both ye and I may attain, through
grace, to be thus happy, is and shall be the
serious, fervent, and constant prayer of,

My very dear friends,

Yours to love and serve you in the gospel
of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

London, Jan. 1, 1700,
Being the first Day both of the
Year and Century.

ROBERT FLEMING.

A POSTSCRIPT,

A POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE APOCALYPTICAL INTERPRETATIONS ADVANCED IN THE PRECEDING DISCOURSE.

AFTER I had finished the foregoing discourse, and that all the sheets were almost printed, I was earnestly urged by a friend, to say something to secure the foundation I go upon; especially because the learning of *Grotius* and *Dr. Hammond* had influenced many to follow another way of interpreting the Revelation, as the reputation of *Mr. Baxter* had swayed others to think well of the same. And when I urged that *Dr. More* in his *Mystery of Iniquity*, and *Dr. Cressener* in his *Demonstration of the first Principles of the Protestant Interpretations of the Apocalypse*, had done this sufficiently already; he replied, that these books were both voluminous and dark, and not easy to be purchased by every one; and that therefore some short account of this matter at this time seemed to be necessary. I urged many things

things against this, as that this advice came too late, and that should I contract never so much, it would swell this part of my book too much, to keep a due proportion with the other discourses, and indeed make the whole too bulky. But after all, importunity and the respect I bore my friend, prevailed with me to say something to all those things that he thought I ought to premise. Therefore, not to spend any longer time in giving the reasons why I did not speak to these things before, in their proper place, or why I do so now, I shall give my thoughts of this book and the first principles of the right interpretation of it, in some propositions, which do gradually lay the foundation of what I advanced before.

1st Proposition. *The revelation was written by the apostle John, and is a sacred and canonical Book of the New Testament.*

I hope there is no Christian that will dispute the truth of this proposition with me. For, besides that the stile of *John* may be easily traced in this book, notwithstanding the difference of the subject from that which he wrote of in his gospel and epistles, he does frequently make mention of himself, and that

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with such peculiar circumstances, as agree with none but the apostle ; as we see *chap. i. verse 1, 2, 4, 9.* See also *chap. xxi. 2,* and *xxii. 8.*

I know indeed that some of the ancients doubted of this, as *Caius* a Latin father, mentioned by *Eusebius*, *hist. lib. 3. cap. 28,* and *Dionysius of Alexandria*, who made a great noise against it for a while, as we see in *Eusebius* also, *hist. lib. 7. cap. 4.* But yet even this man declares that he owns it to be a sacred book, though not written by the apostle *John*. Wherein he speaks, what we must look upon to be altogether absurd. For if *St. John* be not the author, it must be an imposture, seeing his name is inserted in it, as being the penman. So that if it be not *St. John's*, it is no sacred book. Or if it be a sacred book, the author is none but the beloved apostle. But the weakness and inconsistency of this *Dionysius's* reasons against this book, are sufficiently though briefly exposed by *Monsieur du Pin*, both in his preliminary dissertation to his *Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques*, and in his *History of the Canon of the Books of Scripture*.

And if this were any argument against the Divinity of this book, that some persons have doubted

doubted of it, or denied it to be canonical, there is hardly one book in the New Testament that would stand the test: seeing we find in the ancient church history that there have been not only particular men, but even sects of them, that have excepted, some against one book, and some against others. And we know, that the Epistles of *James* and *Jude*, and the second and third Epistles of *John*, and that admirable Epistle to the *Hebrews*, have been controverted, as well as the *Apocalypse*; of the authority of which, neither papist nor protestant, *Grecian* nor *Armenian* Christian doubts at this day.

And as all Christians do now acquiesce in the *Revelation*, as a canonical book; so excepting those I mentioned, and the heretics called *Alogians*, all the eminent fathers of the church received it of old. So did *Justin Martyr*, *Dialog. cum Tryph. Irenæus*, lib. 4. cap. 37. and 50, and lib. 5. cap. 30, and apud *Euseb.* lib. 5. cap. 8. *Tertullian*, adv. *Marc.* lib. 3. cap. 5. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, apud *Euseb.* lib. 3. cap. 23. *Origen* in *Mat.* and in *Joh.* and apud *Euseb.* lib. 6. cap. 25, and *Eusebius himself*, *Hist.* lib. 4. cap. 28. Nay all the other fathers agree in this also,

viz. *Epiphanius, Victorinus, Theophilus, Cyprian, Methodius, Jerom*; and other authors quoted by *Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerom*, viz. *Melito, Hippolitus, Victorinus, &c.*

But for my own part, were all these authorities wanting, there is that in this book itself, that would inforce me to own it as divine. For besides the augustness of its stile, the wisdom of its texture, and the purity of its design and counsels, there is something that I want a name for, that commands my belief and veneration, and insinuates itself into my affection and conscience, as if Christ himself breathed something divine in every line. But the clear view of the fulfilling of the several parts of its prophecy, is an argument that even several other books of the New Testament want.

2d Proposition. *The Book of the Revelation of John was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.*

The notion of *Grotius*, upon which his interpretation of the *Apocalypse* is founded, is this; *That the seven kings or heads of the beast, mentioned Rev. xvii. 10, are not to be understood of seven several forms of government, but of seven particular emperors, viz. Claudius, Nero,*

Nero, Galba, Ottho, Vitellius, Vespasian, and *Titus*, and that *Domitian* is the *eighth*, who was of the *seventh*, because as he pretends he governed during his father's absence.

The foundation which he lays, for the probation of this is, that *John* was banished into *Patmos*, in the reign of *Claudius*; but that though he saw his visions then, he did not write them till *Vespasian's* time. For he must make this *last supposition*, as well as the *first*, else his notion would be condemned immediately, seeing it is said, that *five of these kings were fallen*, Rev. xvii. 10, that is, says *he and Hammond*, when he wrote, not when he saw these visions. But how false this is, any body may see with half an eye; seeing these words are not *John's*, but the *angel's* to him. And therefore the defenders of this opinion must find out *five emperors* that were fallen before *Claudius*, if they will restrict these heads of the beast to particular men: for if the angel spake these words to *John* in the days of *Claudius*, they must relate to them that went before, or to none.

This is enough to destroy this notion of theirs, and I know not how it is possible for any of their admirers to save their credit this

way. But seeing the principal thing they found upon is this, that *John* saw the Apocalypticall visions in the days of *Claudius*, and that so all, or at least most of the *Revelation*, relates to things that fell out before the *destruction of Jerusalem*; I shall say something further to disprove this assertion, and to confirm the verity of our proposition.

Now there are only two things adduced by *Grotius* and *Hammond* to prove, that *John* was in *Patmos*, in the reign of *Claudius*: the first is that *Claudius* raised a persecution against both Jews and Christians, and that, being the first persecutor, it is probable that *John* was banished at that time. The second is, that *Epiphanius* does expressly assert, that it was by *Claudius*, *John* was banished to *Patmos*.

As to the first of these, it is nothing but a supposition, without any proof; for we have no account, either in the Acts of the Apostles or in any other writer, that *Claudius* did ever persecute either Jews or Christians. And *Lactantius de Mort. Pers.* does expressly assert, that no Emperor did persecute the Christians before *Nero*. It is true, *Suetonius* says, *Claudius Judæos impulsore Chresto, or Chresto, tumultuantes*

Roma

Roma expulit.— And *Luke* tells us, that *Claudius* banished the *Jews* from *Rome*, which occasioned *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, and other Christian *Jews*, to retire from *Rome*; but neither of them say that he persecuted the *Christians*, or even the *Jews*. Now, as for the expression of *Suetonius*, *impulfore Chresto*, or *Christo*, the meaning must be this, that the *Jews* that did not believe, going about to stir up the government at *Rome*, as they did every where else (as is plain from the book of the *Acts*) against the *Christians*, and appearing against them in a tumultuous manner, upon the occasion of *Christ*, complaints might probably be brought to the Emperor, who no doubt, upon this account, banished all of that nation from *Rome*. So that *Suetonius* having a confused notion of *Christ*, might easily be induced to express himself this way. And now that this was all that *Claudius* did against the Christians is plain to me from one argument that has escaped *Dr. More*, but is to me unanswerable, taken from the 18th chapter of the *Acts*; where, after the sacred historian had taken notice of *Claudius's* banishing the *Jews* out of *Rome*, and of *Aquila* and *Priscilla's* being lately come upon that account from *Italy* to *Corinth*, he tells us of *Paul's* lodging

with them, because he was of the same occupation. But being pressed in spirit, to preach Christ, upon the coming of *Silas* and *Timothy* from *Macedonia*, he goes into their synagogue, and reasons with the *Jews* and proselytes there, upon this head; and having converted some, particularly *Crispus*, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and *Justus*, in whose house he afterwards disputed; *Crispus* no doubt being thrown out of his office, and *Sosthenes* put in his stead, and *Paul* continuing to preach in *Justus*' house, which joined to the synagogue; the *Jews* are incensed to to such a degree, as to rise tumultuously against *Paul*. *Sosthenes*, therefore, the new chief ruler of the synagogue, and the rest of the unbelieving *Jews*, make an insurrection, and seize upon *Paul*, and carry him to the judgment-seat, before the Proconsul *Gallio*, that excellent *Roman*, the elder brother of *Seneca*. He tells the *Jews*, that if *Paul*, or any other man, was guilty of what was *lewd*, *wicked*, or *unjust*, that in that case he was obliged to punish such persons according as the *Roman law* and *justice* did require. But seeing they accused *Paul* of nothing of that kind, but only of *doctrinal matters*, relating to their *own law and religion*, he had nothing

to

to do with them; and therefore he drove them all away, and set *Paul* at liberty, which made the *Gentiles* fall upon *Softhenes*, the chief author of this tumult, and beat him before the judgment-seat; which *Gallio* permitted to be done, and connived at, either as judging that he did deserve to be so treated, or as supposing it might prevent the *Jews* from acting so factiously and tumultuously again. Now, after this short but exact account of this history, it will be easy to see how precarious and groundless, nay false, Grotius's opinion is, of a persecution's being raised against *Jews* and *Christians* in the days of *Claudius*. For if there had been any such thing, or any edict for it, how came *Gallio* to tolerate a public synagogue of the *Jews*, and suffer *Paul* to preach openly? Or if the *Christians* were only ordered to be persecuted, why did not the *Jews* use this as the reason of their accusing *Paul*, who to be sure wanted not a good-will to have done so, and were not ignorant that this would have been the main argument to prevail with the Proconsul? And had there been any such edict, can we imagine that *Gallio* was ignorant of it? for so he must have been, seeing he tells the *Jews* that he had no orders to punish any
man

man for his religion or sentiments that way, but only those who were guilty of wickedness or lewdness in life. If any say, that his temper was *to care for none of these things*, I answer, this expression may indeed denote his temper; but I suppose it speaks forth not only that, but his principle and sentiment, as judging it unrighteous to persecute, or punish any man for mere opinion. But, whatever this had been, had there been any edict for persecuting the *Christians* or *Jews*, he durst not have neglected his orders, especially when the edict must have been so recent, and when he had what might have passed for a just reason of his punishing both the party accusing, and the party accused, *viz.* their disturbing (as he might have represented it) of the public peace. But indeed it is too plain to need any further proof, that *Claudius's* banishing the *Jews* out of *Rome*, was accompanied with no persecution, either against *them*, or against the *Christians*. And this *Dr. Hammond* confirms, by what he says in his annotations on the 31st verse of the 26th chapter of the *Acts*, forgetting, that this way he destroys his own foundation of interpreting the revelation; where, upon these words of *Luke*, that *Agrippa*, *Festus*, and *Berenice*, and the rest of the company,

company, after they had heard *Paul's* defence, did conclude, that he had done nothing that deserved either death or imprisonment, the Doctor observes, that the reason why they did conclude so was, because there had been as yet no edict emitted against the Christians, by any of the Emperors: and this was the reason also, says he, why *Gallio*, the proconsul of *Achaia*, said publicly, that it was not for him to judge of things that the *Roman* laws had determined nothing about. For, continues the Doctor, though *Claudius* had commanded the *Jews* to leave *Italy*, by which the Christian *Jews* were forced to go away also, not as they were *Christians*, but because they were *Jews*, yet there was yet no law made against *Christians*, as such, at this time. It is true, he says, that *John* was not only banished, as *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were, but confined in the isle of *Patmos*. But he should have given the reason why *John* was the only person persecuted; however, I shall examine this assertion, and the reason that the Doctor gives for it in other places of his annotations.

We come therefore now, in the second place, to consider the testimony of *Epiphanius*, upon whose credit alone *Grotius* and *Hammond* believe that *John* was in *Patmos* in *Claudius's*

time. And here, by the way, I cannot forbear to observe the strange mistake of Dr. *Lightfoot*, who agrees in the main with these learned men in interpreting the Revelation, in relation to the *Jews* before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and therefore makes *John* to see these visions long before that ; but has this peculiar to himself, that he imagines *John* was not banished there, but went thither voluntarily to preach the gospel to the inhabitants ; whereas *John* himself doth expressly tell us, that he was there as a sufferer and witness for Christ, chap. i. 5, 9. *I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ ;* so that, as this refutes Dr. *Lightfoot*, and confirms what *Grotius* and *Hammond* agree in, that *John* was not in *Patmos* as a traveller, but as a prisoner and sufferer ; so it is enough to refute even them also : for the words do plainly insinuate, that *John* was not the only persecuted man at this time, but that there was then a persecution raised against all Christians in general ; and therefore we may be assured that he was not in that island in the days of *Claudius*, in whose
time

time we have proved there was no persecution.

But to return: *Epiphanius* says, indeed, that *John* saw his visions in *Patmos*, in the reign of *Claudius*, *Heref.* 51, *Sect.* 12 and 33. But can his single authority weigh down all antiquity, that says the contrary? Shall we believe him rather than *Irenæus*, who lived two hundred years before him, and was the scholar of *Polycarp*, the scholar of *John* himself? Now what can be plainer than the words of *Irenæus*, *Lib.* 5, *cap.* 30, as they are preserved in the original by *Eusebius*, *Lib.* 5, *cap.* 8, *Hist. Eccl.* Ἐι γάρ ἔδει ἀναφανδὸν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ κηρύττεσθαι τ' ὄνομα αὐτοῦ δι' ἐκείνου ἂν ἐρρήθη τῷ καὶ τὴν Ἀποκάλυψιν ἑωρακάτω: εἰδὲ γάρ πρό πολλοῦ χρόνου ἑώραδῃ, ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας γενεάς, πρὸ τῷ τέλει τῆς Δομιτιανῆς ἀρχῆς. That is, *If his name* (*viz.* that of Anti-Christ, or the Beast) *had been openly to be divulged at this time, it would no doubt have been told by him that saw the apocalyptic visions: for it is not a long time since he saw these, but even in some sense in our own time, viz. towards the end of the reign of Domitian.* And that *Irenæus* had just reason to say, that *John's* seeing the revelation was almost in his own time, or within the memory of the men of that generation, if not his

his own also, is plain from chronology ; for he being the scholar of *Polycarp*, who was martyred in the year of Christ 167, and being himself put to death in the year 202, if we suppose that he wrote this but ten or twelve years before his death, yet he might justly say, that there was but about an age's difference from his time, and that wherein *John* saw the revelation : for if *John* was in *Patmos* towards the end of *Domitian's* reign, it could not be sooner, in any propriety of speech, than the year 90, seeing he began his government *An.* 81, and died 96. And who can doubt but *Irenæus* does deliver here what his master *Polycarp* had told him ? For as none knew the history of *John* better than that worthy person, so none had better opportunity to know what related to this matter than *Irenæus*, by reason of his long and intimate acquaintance with him. This seemed a foundation sure enough of old to *Eusebius* ; and if some men had not some private ends to promote, by opposing it, might be a sufficient foundation to all men still. Let us therefore hear what this learned historian says on this head : “ *In those days,*” says *Eusebius* (*viz.* in the days of *Cerdo*, *Ignatius*, and *Siméon*, of whom he had been speaking) “ *the*
“ *Apostle*

“ *Apostle John, the beloved disciple, was yet*
 “ *alive, inspecting the churches of Asia, hav-*
 “ *ing returned after Domitian’s death from*
 “ *the island, whither he had been banished.*
 “ *Now that John was then alive, it is enough*
 “ *to adduce the testimony of two persons of*
 “ *great authority, who are worthy of all be-*
 “ *lief, and were ever eminent for defending*
 “ *the truth, I mean Irenæus and Clemens*
 “ *Alexandrinus; the first of whom, in his se-*
 “ *cond book against Heresies, speaks thus:*
 “ *All the Presbyters, says Irenæus, who lived*
 “ *familiarly with the Apostle John in Asia, do*
 “ *assure us, that they had this related to them*
 “ *from John himself; for he lived with them*
 “ *even unto the times of Trajan. In his third*
 “ *book also, Irenæus gives us the same ac-*
 “ *count, in these words; The church of Ephe-*
 “ *sus also, which was founded by the Apostle*
 “ *Paul, and was afterwards under the care of*
 “ *the Apostle John, until Trajan’s time, is an*
 “ *eminent witness of what was delivered to us*
 “ *by the Apostles. And besides him, Clemens*
 “ *likewise, says Eusebius, does not only take*
 “ *notice of the same time, but gives a parti-*
 “ *cular story relating to him, in that book of*
 “ *his, which bears this title, What rich man*
 “ *can*

“ *can be saved?* And then *Eusebius* recites
 “ the story at length, which were too long
 “ to insert here.”

Now if *John* lived to the days of *Trajan*, he must have been a prodigiously old man, according to *Epiphanius*, who says he was 90 years of age in *Claudius*’ time: for giving him all the allowance that can be desired, *viz.* that *John* was so old in the last year of *Claudius*, and that he died in the first year of *Trajan*, he must have been 134 years old at least when he died; seeing *Claudius* died, A. C. 54, and *Trajan* did not begin to reign until the year 98, though others say, with more probability, not until A. C. 100. Now, besides that it is not easy to believe that so thoughtful and laborious a man should live so long, the improbability of what *Epiphanius* says appears further from this, that if in the year 54 from *Christ*’s birth *John* was 90 years of age, he must have been 36 years older than *Christ*. And if so, it seems very odd that *Christ* should say to him from the cross, *Man, behold thy mother*, and to *Mary, Woman, behold thy son*. For as this seems to say, that he was at least as young as *Christ*, this account makes him an old man of near 70 years of age

age at that time ; which as it must suppose *Mary* to be a very aged person, of between 80 and 90 at least, so it contradicts the constant and unanimous tradition of the church, which supposes him to be very young at that time. Whence *Baronius* says, that he was but 25 years old. And *Nicephorus* relates, out of an epistle of *Evodius, Bishop of Antioch*, that the virgin herself was not then 50 ; seeing Christ, as he asserts, was born when she was but 15 years old.

Whence it appears, how little we ought to trust *Epiphanius*, in opposition to all antiquity besides. Which made *Drusus* say, *Scimus omnes Epiphanium in multis graviter hallucinatum*. And upon the same account *Petavius* scruples not to correct him : for where he has it *Imperante Claudio*, he writes this short note in the margin, *mendose pro Domitiano*.

But the truth is, though I am not willing to detract from this author's credit, yet I suspect it was not so much an error of judgment as of will, or that which some call a *Pia Fraus*, that made him desert the tradition of the church in this matter. For his telling us this story is upon the occasion of an objection

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of the *Montanists* against the Apocalypse, taken from this supposition, that there was no church in *Thyatira* when *John* wrote the Revelation: which, it seems, he thought would serve another turn, if he inverted it, by telling them that *John* said so only by way of prophecy. Whence he proceeds to prove the verity and divinity of the book; and therefore thought his argument would be the more cogent, the further he run up the date of the Revelation and *John's* being in *Patmos*. But as this was a poor as well as unlawful shift, so I shall leave him and his authority both, to those that have more time and leisure to consider them further.

For to me there is proof enough from the Revelation itself to assure us, that it was written in *Domitian's* time: for it is plain, not only from *ch. i. verse 9*, which I touched upon before, but from the strain of all the *Seven Epistles* which *John* writes to the churches of *Asia*, that at the time of his being in *Patmos*, or rather before, there had been a severe persecution upon them. Therefore he tells the church of *Ephesus*, that she had *laboured and endured, and had not fainted under the troubles that had come upon her*, chap. ii. verse 2. And
 so

so the Christians of *Smyrna* are told of their tribulation, and exhorted not to fear imprisonment, or any other thing that they should suffer, v. 9, 10. This being added, that they must expect tribulation for ten days; which by the way is no inconsiderable hint, seeing the persecution of *Domitian*, from the first beginning of it, lasted about ten years, which in the dialect of St. *John* are called *days*. I might mention many other things, but this is plain, that the church was under persecution every where at that time, if it were only from these and the like expressions, *Be thou faithful unto the death*; and *to him that overcometh I will do so and so*. And besides all these things, mention is made of an eminent martyr of the church of *Pergamus*, chap. ii. ver. 13, whose name was *Antipas*. For the Apostle *John*, or rather *Christ*, is so express in relating this, that we may deny any thing in the Bible, if we deny this matter of fact. I am not concerned here with the allegories some fanciful men make upon this name, when they tell us that it signifies as much as *Antipater* or *Antipapa*: nor have I any thing to do with the stories that later authors tell us of him, as of his being *Bishop of Pergamus*, and of his being

burnt in a *brazen bull*, with other circumstantial matters relating to his person or death. Let *Aretha*, therefore, *Metaphrastes*, *Cedrenus*, *Pererius*, *Surius*, *Baronius*, *Cornelius a Lapide*, and a thousand more, be supposed to mistake in their relating this story; yet no man shall ever make me disbelieve what *St. John* says of this matter. And I must have further proof, than ever I expect to receive, before I can believe that all these *authors* are mistaken, as to the foundation of their relation, when they unanimously tell us, that *this martyr* suffered in the reign of *Domitian*.

And now I suppose I have said enough to prove that *John* was not in *Patmos* before the reign of *Domitian*: and if so, the foundation of *Grotius* and his followers falls to the ground. So that these *corollaries* must naturally follow from what has been said, and remain as certain truths.

1st Corol. *The visions of the Apocalypse relate neither to the Romish nor Jewish state, before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.*

2d Corol. *The Revelation relates to the church and her adversaries, as to those things that were to fall out after the everſion of the Jewish state.*

Now, before I proceed, I must desire the reader

reader to observe the distribution which Christ himself makes of the subjects treated of in this book, *ch. i. v. 19*, when he commands *John*, saying, Γράφον ἃ εἶδες, καὶ ἃ ἔστι, καὶ ἃ μέλλει γένησθαι μετὰ ταῦτα: i. e. *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.* Where it is plain three things are distinguished. 1. *The things which John had seen*, viz. the emblems, figures, or hieroglyphical representations, that had been objected to his eyes or imagination, from *v. 12* to *v. 19*. Then 2. *The things which were existent and in being at the time when John was in Patmos*, viz. the churches planted by the Apostles, particularly the Seven Asiatic ones, to which *John* had a peculiar relation, and to which he was ordered to direct seven epistles. And then 3. *The things which were to fall out hereafter*, viz. the prophetic part of the book beginning with the *4th chapter*, as is plain from the *1st verse* thereof; where, after *John* had written what related to both the former heads, he tells us, that he heard a voice, like the voice of a trumpet, talking with him, and commanding him now to begin and write *the things which he was to shew him and represent to him emblematically*,
which

which were to be *μὲν ταῦτα*, *after the expiration of the other things mentioned before*, which were said then to exist, *viz. the then present circumstances of the Asiatic churches.*

So that this is a sufficient answer to those who object, that this book cannot be supposed to contain a prophecy of the state of the church for any long time, seeing it is said, that *the things prophesied of in the Revelation must shortly come to pass*, chap. i. v. 1. For seeing we have a double explication of this expression, *viz. chap. i. ver. 19, and chap. iv. v. 1.* I ask, whether we are to stick so to the letter of the first short proposition, as to reject the explication given of it in the following places? It was very proper indeed, when some things in this book did concern the then present state of the church, and some other things that did relate to the future condition of it; to say, as in chap. i. v. 1, that the prophecy related to things that were shortly to come to pass: because not only were those things to be soon fulfilled that concerned the churches of *Asia* at that time; but the other things were then also to enter upon their begun accomplishment. But that we might not imagine that the whole of this book was to be accomplished

accomplished shortly, we are told, *chap. i. v. 19*, and *chap. iv. v. 1*, that what related to future time, was to be accomplished and fall out afterwards. And that accordingly we might see the full extent of this prophecy, we are led down from scene to scene, till we are brought to the end and consummation of all things at last. And now, seeing we have proved that this book was written after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, we must desire our antagonists to find out something else, to which they can accommodate all the figures of the Revelation, before we quit our interpretation, merely because they dislike it, though they can offer us nothing in the room of the same. So that until they be able to enlighten our minds with another scheme than that of *Grotius*, which we have sufficiently, though briefly, refuted, I must be bold to lay down this *further corollary*, which is the same with our *first postulatam* in the preceding discourse.

3d Corol. *That the Revelation contains the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the state of the Christian church to the end of the world.*

And the same distribution of this book, into
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the three parts I have mentioned, lays a sufficient foundation for another proposition also.

3d Proposition. *The seven Epistles directed to as many churches in the lesser Asia, do not immediately relate to the Christian church in general, and therefore cannot be interpreted prophetically, in any proper sense, as if they did denote so many periods of time in relation to it.*

I might demonstrate this, were it needful. But seeing it makes nothing for my design, which way soever men understand it, I shall say nothing to it now; especially because the learned *Witsius*, my professor and master formerly, has sufficiently demonstrated what I assert in this proposition, in his *Diatrise de septem Epistolarum Apocalypticarum sensu historico et prophetico*, published in his *Miscellanea Sacra*.

And neither have I time to prove other propositions, that might appear more necessary; only seeing the key of interpreting the Apocalypse, which the angel gives *John*, chap. xvii. is so very plain, I cannot but build another proposition upon it.

4th Proposition. *Babylon the great, or the Apocalyptical Beast, taken in a general sense, as it is represented, with its seven heads, and ten horns,*

horns, is no other than an emblem of the Roman empire.

For besides that Dr. *Cressener*, and others, have proved this, the text itself is demonstration enough to all those that will be at pains, attentively and impartially to consider it. For seeing the angel does expressly say, that by this was meant *the seven-hilled city*, ver. 9, and *the city that then did reign over the kings of the earth*, ver. 18, I cannot imagine what he could have said more plainly upon this head.

But seeing he represents the empire, under the peculiar consideration of its being governed by a *woman*, who is called *the great Whore, or Adulteress*; therefore this lays a foundation for another proposition.

5th Proposition. *The seven-headed beast, more especially considered, as it is represented as rid upon by the whore, doth represent Rome to us as it is under the ecclesiastical government of the papacy, or apostate church of Rome.*

This the angel does sufficiently insinuate, chap. xvii. ver. 8, when he says, *The beast which thou sawest, was, and yet is not at this time*, i. e. The beast which thou sawest, is indeed the same *Roman empire* which was be-

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fore,

fore, and was represented to thee, *chap. xiii. v. 1.* But *it is not yet*, in another sense, *viz.* as now thou beholdest it under the rule of a *whore*, or the *apostate church of Rome*. For this last ecclesiastical form of government is not yet come, but it is *to come* (when it ariseth) *out of the bottomless pit, in order to go thither again, into endless perdition.*

And if this be once granted, then that will naturally follow, which I am to represent as another proposition.

6th Proposition. *The seven kings, represented by the seven heads of the beast, are no other than the seven forms of supreme government, that did successively obtain among the Romans.*

This the angel doth likewise sufficiently insinuate, *ver. 10*, which can never be understood of particular emperors, at least not of those *Grotius* fixed upon, whose opinion this way we have already refuted. And therefore seeing *five* of the *forms* of the *Roman government* were fallen in *John's* time, *viz. kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes*, (as *Tacitus* reckons them, *Annal. lib. 1. sect. 1.*) and seeing the *imperial authority* was that which was in being then, we have no
reason

reason to quit so plain and exact an interpretation, until more be said against it, than ever has been yet produced to the world.

And were it not that I am confined so much now, both as to time, and lest this postscript should swell to an enormous bulk, I should not fear to attempt the demonstration of these last propositions, and to proceed to others that would lay a further and more strong foundation still, of that method of interpreting the Revelation, which the generality of protestants are agreed in. But I hope I have said enough for this place, to secure the principles I go upon, by which the things which I proposed at first as *postulata* are, I think, sufficiently proved. And seeing my principal design in writing this postscript, was to refute the hypothesis that *Grotius* and *Hammond* go upon, I leave it to the candid and impartial thoughts of the reader, whether I have not said enough to prove it to be altogether precarious.

And now seeing how every one must see how much I have been straitened, both as to time and paper, in this postscript, I hope the reader will pass the more favourable construction on what defects he may observe in my performance,

performance, either as to *matter, method*, or the *calculation* of time, which I have run upon; in which if there be any thing obscure or confused, the study of brevity, and dispatch has occasioned it. But since I have advanced nothing, in relation to *future time*, but by way of *conjecture*, nor indeed asserted any thing (in relation to that part of the prophecy which is fulfilled) dogmatically and positively, but only proposed my thoughts, after the manner of a *rational probability*, I suppose no man will think it worth his while to make a noise about little mistakes, that perhaps I may have been guilty of, through haste or inadvertency. But if any person shall take occasion, from what I have said, to study the *Apocalypse* to better advantage than I have attained to do, and shall give the world a better built, and more clearly connected scheme of the visions of this book; I assure him, that none shall more rejoice in such a performance than I, and I shall be one of the first to return him thanks for refuting me. For *truth is all I seek after, and that it may ever, and in all respects prevail, is, and shall be my constant prayer and study.* Amen.

THE END.